



THE INDEPENDENT

No 3,811

TUESDAY 5 JANUARY 1999

(1RS0p) 45p



Why do we reach for the stars? FRONT



Forgive me, sister, for I have sinned FEATURES, P8



IN THE TUESDAY REVIEW + MEDIA

Whelan sacrificed as Blair tries to heal government divisions

GORDON BROWN sacrificed his controversial press secretary yesterday as Tony Blair sought to stabilise his Government after two weeks of turmoil sparked by the Peter Mandelson affair.

Charlie Whelan, one of the Chancellor's closest aides, announced he is to leave his job as the Treasury's press secretary despite strongly denying that he leaked details of Mr Mandelson's £373,000 personal loan from Geoffrey Robinson, the former paymaster-general.

Downing Street denied that Mr Whelan had been forced out.

By ANDREW GRICE
Political Editor

Saturday, several cabinet ministers were calling for his head, with some threatening to raise the issue in Cabinet next week.

Alastair Campbell, Mr Blair's press secretary, is believed to have told the Prime Minister he would no longer work with Mr Whelan after Mr Mandelson's sudden departure just before Christmas.

Mr Whelan said that the level of media speculation about his role in the affair was making it impossible to carry out his job effectively. "I do take the view that the job of press secretary becomes extremely difficult if the press secretary, and not the department he serves, becomes the story and the subject of excessive attention," he said.

"It is absurd that, on the day the euro starts trading, in the week the Monetary Policy Committee is meeting and when the Chancellor is working on a number of important initiatives for the new year, that there is such attention focused on me."

Mr Whelan said he would stand down as soon as he found another job, which is expected to be in the private sector.

The Tories said he was a "lame duck" and should stand down immediately, but called on him to serve a period of "quarantine" before taking a private sector job because he knows the secrets of Mr Brown's March Budget.

Although Downing Street insisted there was no evidence that Mr Whelan leaked details of Mr Mandelson's loan, and paid tribute to his work, it revealed that Mr Campbell would have to approve his successor at the Treasury.



Charlie Whelan, the Chancellor's press secretary, arriving at the Treasury yesterday Russell Boyce/Reuters

Cabinet ministers hope that Mr Whelan's announcement will allow the Government to "get back to the basics" of concentrating on policy.

"Now is the time to draw a line under recent events," said David Blunkett, the Secretary of State for Education and Employment. "The key political issue is not the obsession with

so-called spin-doctors and camps but the Government's united determination to keep the promises we made to the electorate."

Mr Blair still in the Seychelles, tried to bring to an end last night the most unhappy period since he won power by completing the ministerial reshuffle caused by the resig-

nations of Mr Mandelson and Mr Robinson. The Prime Minister underlined his desire to cement his close relationship with his Chancellor by allowing him to promote Dawn Primarolo, a junior Treasury minister, to paymaster-general.

Michael Willis, a close ally of Mr Brown on the Labour back benches, was promoted to the

post of junior minister at the Department of Trade and Industry. The changes were seen at Westminster as a sign that Mr Blair wants his axis with Mr Brown to be the Government's pivotal relationship.

The developments follow Mr Brown's decision to form an alliance with John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister, aimed

at reasserting traditional Labour values since Mr Mandelson's resignation.

David Heathcoat-Amory, the Tories' chief Treasury spokesman, said: "The real problem is not one out-of-control spin-doctor but ministers who are so obsessed with their own fiefdoms and doing down their colleagues that the business of

government — and the interests of Britain — are suffering."

As speculation grew about Mr Whelan's successor, one front-runner was Kevin Maguire, political editor of *The Mirror* and the journalist who is closest to Mr Whelan and the Chancellor. Another is David-John Collins, press secretary to Ken Jackson, leader of the AEEU union.

TWO WEEKS OF TURMOIL

23 December

Peter Mandelson resigns as Secretary of State for Trade and Industry after it is revealed that he accepted a £373,000 loan from the Paymaster General, Geoffrey Robinson, to buy a £475,000 house in Notting Hill, west London. In his resignation letter to the Prime Minister, Mr Mandelson says: "I should not, with all candour, have entered into the arrangement."



23 December

The embattled Paymaster-General, Geoffrey Robinson, resigns on the same day, saying in his resignation letter that after 12 months of "a highly charged political campaign" against him he had reached the point where it was right for him to go.



29 December

The Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott, seeks to inject Old Labour values into the New Labour project when he tells *The Independent* that the Government was "a massive deliverer, particularly when we have decided that public expenditure is there to uphold the economy in the traditional Keynesian way."



Sterling falls as world markets welcome euro

THE PRIME Minister raised expectations last night of British entry to the European single currency after financial markets around the world rushed to embrace the euro on the first day of trading.

The euro rose sharply against the dollar and share prices on European stock markets registered big gains after a shaky start. London was virtually stunned by investors in what threatens to be a foretaste of life on the fringes of Europe's \$10trn capital market — the largest in the world.

A runaway success for the

By ANDREW GARFIELD,
COLIN BROWN AND
STEPHEN CASTLE
in Brussels

euro would make the momentum for Britain's entry unstoppable, and Mr Blair yesterday reinforced the impression that it was a case of "when" not "if" Britain would join.

Both the Prime Minister and Eddie George, the Governor of the Bank of England, stressed that Britain's economy was at a different point in the cycle to the euro-countries, led by France and Germany,

which have lowered interest rates to 3 per cent, but there were no constitutional obstacles to entry.

"It would not have been in Britain's national economic interest to do so at this stage," Mr Blair said in *The Wall Street Journal*. "But our position is clear... If the euro works and the economic benefits are clear and unambiguous, we would recommend entry."

He pledged that London would "be at the centre of the euro even though Britain is not part of the first wave".

Trading on the first day

showed that the euro had passed its first important test. On the foreign exchange markets, the euro rose nearly three-quarters of 1 per cent against the dollar. Sterling by contrast had a poor day.

"Economic and monetary union (EMU) turns other western European economies from medium-sized players among equals into small entities on the fringe of a giant," said Holger Schmieding, an economist at Merrill Lynch, the Wall Street investment bank. "If need be, these outsiders will have to adjust to EMU, not vice versa."

Nick Parsons, City economist at Paribas, a leading French bank, warned: "Sterling risks being marginalised, at a time when the UK economy is moving into recession."

"We think the euro will be the best performing currency this year as more and more people switch out of the dollar."

Europe's political leaders hailed the first day of trading in the euro as a big success, with claims that the new currency will be strong enough to allow the Continent to escape "economic domination" by the United States.

The French Finance Minister, Dominique Strauss-Kahn, led the chorus of approval, forecasting that the euro would become as important as the dollar. In a radio interview in France, Mr Strauss-Kahn argued that Europe's 11-nation economic bloc will operate on equal status to the US, ensuring that it "will no longer be subjected to economic domination". The minister added: "The euro is an instrument at the service of policy. It will restore to us a power that we had largely lost."

Euro notes will not start circulating until 2002, but the launch of the euro will increase the pressure for an early referendum on Britain's entry, which is not due until after the next general election.

Dealers in the City said the huge task of converting millions of bank deposits and trillions of dollars of assets from the old European currencies to euros had gone smoothly, enabling trading to start on time yesterday without a hitch.

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A girl is being blocked from visiting her father in prison
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A man was being held last night after the kidnap of a mother and daughter
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Senators seek to delay the State of the Union address
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Massacre in Pakistan
At least 17 worshippers were killed in a Shia mosque when three gunmen opened fire
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THE INDEPENDENT ABROAD
Australia \$5.90 AS
Austria 40.00 Sch
Belgium 50 BF
Canada 3.50 C\$
Czech Republic 112 K
Denmark 120 CS
Finland 19.00 FM
France 16.00 FF
Germany 4.50 DM
Greece 700 Dr
Hungary 255 Forint
Italy 5.000 L
Japan 12.00 ¥
Latvia 50.00 L\$
Lithuania 5.50 Lt
Malta 0.65c
Netherlands 350 Gld
Norway 26.00 Nkr
Poland 20.00 Zl
Portugal 200 Esc
Romania 23.00 Lei
Russia 1,250,000 Rub
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Sweden 5.00 Skr
Switzerland 5.00 Sfr
Turkey 1,250,000 Lira
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IN THE INDEPENDENT TOMORROW

'Does your wife ever ask you to turn the music down?'

JOHN PEEL ANSWERS YOUR QUESTIONS

THE BEST WRITING, WEEK IN, WEEK OUT: DEBORAH ROSS, HOWARD JACOBSON, HAMISH MCRAE, MARK STEEL, ROBERT FISK, TERENCE BLACKER, JOHN WALSH, RICHARD WILLIAMS, DAVID AARONOVITCH, ANNE McILVOY, THOMAS ST CLIFFE, MILES KINGTON, SUE ARNOLD, ANDREAS WHITTAM SMITH

Blair's old flatmate to take charge of Dome

BY COLIN BROWN AND NICHOLAS SCHOON

THE PRIME Minister yesterday appointed one of his closest friends to be in charge of the £758m Millennium Dome, prompting fresh allegations of promotion for "Tony's cronies".

Lord Falconer of Thoroton, the Minister of State at the Cabinet Office, succeeds Peter Mandelson as the Government's sole shareholder for the project in Greenwich.

Chris Smith, the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, will continue to answer questions on the Dome in the Commons. He was barred from a long-term role because of a possible conflict of interests. He is also chairman of the Millennium Commission, which gives lottery money to the Dome.

But there were fresh Conservative accusations of "cronyism" over the appointment of Lord Falconer, 47, who once shared a flat with Mr Blair in the 1970s, when both were young barristers in London.

Charlie Falconer gave up a legal practice worth a reputed £500,000 a year to take up a life

peerage and become Solicitor-General in the new Labour Government in May 1997, before moving to the Cabinet Office. Lord Falconer has emerged as the "eyes and ears" of the Prime Minister on 14 Cabinet sub-committees. By handing him responsibility for the Dome Mr Blair is underlining the trust he has in his judgement. "He relies on Charlie quite a lot. He seems to rely on him like he relied on Peter Mandelson," said one minister.

But John Redwood, the Conservative spokesman on trade and industry, said: "This is another example of promotion for Tony's cronies."

Peter Ainsworth, the Tory spokesman on culture, condemned the appointment as "yet another example of the cronyism that pervades this Government". He added: "In what way is Lord Falconer qualified to take on the task, other than the fact that he is a



Lord Falconer, Minister of State at the Cabinet Office, will be a behind-the-scenes fixer ironing out problems on the Dome
Brian Harris

close friend of Tony Blair?" Taking charge of the Dome could prove a poisoned chalice, however. Mr Redwood said Lord Falconer could take the blame if it proved a failure while Mr Blair would take the credit if it succeeded.

Whitehall sources said yesterday that the Dome no longer needs a high-profile figure in the Cabinet to promote it. Now that its contents have largely been de-

cided, what is needed is a highly trusted, behind-the-scenes fixer to iron out problems.

Yesterday Lord Falconer declined to be interviewed. As shareholder, he has to ensure the New Millennium Experience Company meets the Government's objectives for the project, due to open on New Year's Eve. He is also in charge of appointments to the board, their pay, and that of the staff.

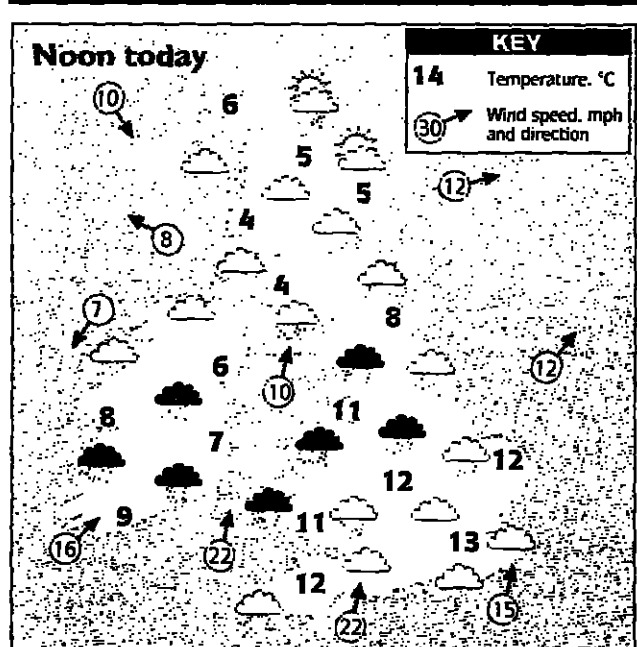
Meanwhile, the Tories will demand a statement next week from Stephen Byers, the new Trade and Industry Secretary, on reports that his predecessor, Mr Mandelson, overruled civil servants who warned that he would have had a conflict of interests by remaining in charge of the Dome while also taking important decisions on some of the Dome's financial backers, such as British Airways.



Lord Falconer is a trusted colleague of Tony Blair's but some Tories view his appointment as another example of 'cronyism'

PA

BRITAIN TODAY



FORECAST

General situation England and Wales will again be very mild, but cloudy with outbreaks of rain and drizzle. After a chilly start, cloud and rain will spread into Northern Ireland and southern Scotland, turning wintry over the highlands at first. Further north, it will stay cold with sunny spells and showers.

East S & SE England, London: Mild and cloudy with some patchy drizzle. Becoming dry and slowly brightening. A moderate southerly wind. Max temp 12-14C (54-57F).

Midlands, SW England, Wales, E Anglia, E England: Morning cloud, rain and hazy fog will slowly clear away to leave it mild. A moderate to fresh south to south-westerly wind. Max temp 11-13C (52-55F).

Channel Is: After a cloudy start, it will become brighter to allow some good sunny spells. A fresh southerly wind. Max temp 12-13C (54-55F).

East N, NW & NE England, Lake District & Lake of Mente: There will be outbreaks of rain, some of which will be heavy. Becoming drier towards the evening. A moderate south-westerly wind. Max temp 9-12C (48-54F).

N Ireland: After a cold start cloud will begin to build from the south to bring some rain for the afternoon. A light and variable wind. Max temp 6-8C (43-46F).

SW & SE Scotland, Glasgow, Edinburgh: A cold start. Rain and hill-snow will spread from the south this afternoon. A light east to south-easterly wind. Max temp 5-7C (41-45F).

NW & NE Scotland, Aberdeen, N & W Isles: Cold with sunny spells and isolated showers, some wintry. A light west to north-west wind. Max temp 3-7C (37-45F).

Continuing mild in the south, although early sunny spells will become confined to the south-east as rain spreads from the north-west. Scotland and Northern Ireland will see rain clearing to showers. Quite windy again with further rain on Thursday.

TRAVEL

London: A12 Green Man Roundabout, Leytonstone. Major roadworks on new M11 link road. Until 31st December. Cambridge A10 between Foston and M11. Resurfacing and bridge maintenance work at Shepperton Hill. Until 14th February. Bristol: M5 J19-18. Motor Roadworks on Avonmouth Bridge. Until 23rd June 2001. M4 J24. Roadworks. Until 11th January. Lancashire: M6 Between J27 Standish and J28 Leyland. Roadworks: continuous and a 50mph speed limit either side of Charnock Richard Services. Until 18th February.

Greater Manchester: A67. Narrow lanes Manchester-bound, due to Metrolink construction work. Until 28th February.

South Yorkshire: M1 Between J34 Tinsley Viaduct (A5109) & J34 Tinsley Viaduct (A5178). Sheffield. Canalside reduced to 2 lanes southbound. Until 21st November 2000.

Dumfries and Galloway: A74 between Beattock and J16 Annan. Major roadworks. Until 31st January.

AA Roadwatcher Call 0336 404177 for the latest local and national traffic news. Source: The Automobile Association. Calls charged at 50p per min (inc VAT).

LIGHTING UP

	4.13pm to	8.44am
Belfast	4.08pm to	8.17am
Bristol	4.16pm to	8.15am
Glasgow	3.59pm to	8.46am
London	4.05pm to	8.05am
Manchester	4.05pm to	8.24am
Newcastle	3.53pm to	8.29am

HIGH TIDES

	AM	HT	PM	HT
Acornmouth	9.15	13.4	9.41	13.0
Cork	7.37	4.5	7.55	4.4
Dover	7.56	5.4	8.21	5.1
Dun Laoghaire	12.0	4.1	1.38	4.3
Falmouth	7.27	5.2	7.52	4.9
Greenwich	2.35	3.4	2.27	3.8
Harwich	1.34	4.0	1.57	4.1
Holyhead	12.09	5.6	12.25	5.8
Hull (Albert Dock)	8.21	8.5	8.31	8.6
Kings Lynn	8.22	5.3	8.28	6.6
Leith	4.35	5.6	4.55	5.6
Liverpool	1.01	8.4	1.19	9.3
Millwall Haven	9.18	7.0	8.39	6.7
Newquay	7.08	7.0	7.32	6.7
Portsmouth	8.57	2.2	9.26	1.9
Portsmouth	1.06	4.7	1.15	4.6
Portsmouth	10.06	5.0	10.30	4.7
Scarborough	6.10	5.8	6.18	5.9
Wick	1.12	3.5	1.24	3.7

AIR QUALITY

	NO _x	SO ₂
London	Good	Good
S England	Good	Good
Wales	Good	Good
C England	Good	Good
N England	Good	Good
Scotland	Good	Good
N Ireland	Good	Good

SUN & MOON

Sun rises:	08.06
Sun sets:	16.06
Moon rises:	20.22
Moon sets:	10.06
Last Quarter:	Jan 9

WEATHERLINE

For the latest forecast call 0800 50000 followed by the two digits for your area. Source: The Met. Office. Calls charged at 50p per min (inc VAT).

COME RAIN OR SHINE...

HEAVY FLOODING from monsoon rains in Malaysia kept more than 11,000 students out of classes yesterday as La Niña, a cold-weather system related to the El Niño phenomenon, tightened its grip on the country.

The forced closures meant an extended holiday break for students and teachers of some 43 schools, mostly near the worst-hit town of Pekan, in Pahang state, 450km (280 miles) east of Kuala Lumpur.

YESTERDAY

EXTREMES

Warmest: Marston 13C (55F)
Coldest (day): Ayrmore 5C (41F)
Wettest: Tulloch Bridge 1.10 ins
Sinnelyst: Durham 2.8 hrs
For 24hrs to 2pm Monday

THE WORLD

EUROPE NOON TODAY

	Key	Temp
London	10-14	10-14
Paris	10-14	10-14
Rome	10-14	10-14
Madrid	10-14	10-14
Amsterdam	10-14	10-14
Brussels	10-14	10-14
Frankfurt	10-14	10-14
Hamburg	10-14	10-14
Berlin	10-14	10-14
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Vilnius	10-14	10-14
Kiev	10-14	10-14
Moscow	10-14	10-14
St. Petersburg	10-14	10-14
Warsaw	10-14	10-14

Ministers unite in delight at the downfall of a very uncivil servant

BY ANDREW GRICE
Political Editor

CHARLIE WHELAN once begged Roger Lyons, leader of the MSF white-collar union, to lend him his mobile telephone during a union conference in Llandudno.

Mr Lyons obliged, but was horrified when he read the diary column of *The Times* the next day, which told the embarrassing story of how he, a union boss supposedly fighting to save British jobs, had a foreign-made phone. "I needed the fifty quid," Mr Whelan told him.

For the press officer of one union to treat the leader of another in such a manner was bad enough; but his enemies say Mr Whelan never really changed his rumbustious style when he moved into the world of politics.

Before and after the 1997 general election, he made a string of enemies among senior Labour politicians, which left him with very few friends when he needed them after last month's sudden resignation from the Cabinet of Peter Mandelson, his biggest foe of all.

Mr Whelan knew he would be prime suspect when details emerged of Mr Mandelson's £373,000 personal loan from Geoffrey Robinson, the former paymaster-general. He denies passing the information to Paul Routledge, a close friend, who included it in his unauthorised biography of Mr Mandelson to be published this month.

Whatever the truth, it suited Mr Whelan's many ministerial critics to believe he played a part in the leak. Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, and Robin Cook, Foreign Secretary, never forgave Mr Whelan for apparently "cooking up" with a journalist plans to privatise the Tote. It was Mr Straw's area of responsibility and Mr Cook is a horse racing fanatic, neither man knew anything about the plan.

Mr Cook also believes he fell victim to Mr Whelan's spin that he was "soft" on spending, as the Chancellor's man highlighted the lavish residences enjoyed by Britain's ambassadors abroad. David Blunkett, Secretary of State for Education, Frank Dobson, Secretary of State for Health, and George Robertson, Secretary of State for Defence, also suspect they were on the receiving end of Mr Whelan's spinning during last year's spending review.

Mo Mowlam, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, was furious to hear reports that Mr Whelan encouraged journalists not to give much coverage to the Chancellor's trip to Ulster last year. He apparently urged them to focus on the problems facing Mr Cook - an old enemy of Mr Brown - after he sacked his diary secretary at the Foreign Office.

Jack Cunningham had been furious at Treasury briefings against him while he was Agriculture Minister and, in his new job as the Cabinet's enforcer, was in a position to demand revenge.

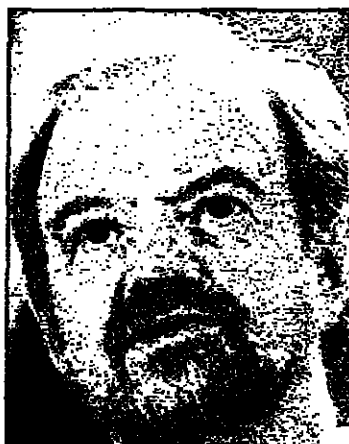
Chris Smith's hostility to Mr Whelan dates back to his days as opposition social security spokesman, when he woke up to hear Radio 4 announce a policy change about child benefit of which he was unaware.

Mr Mandelson was convinced the leak of his loan from Mr Robinson was the culmination of a five-year guerrilla war against him by Mr Whelan. But



Charlie Whelan enjoys a better moment with his boss and friend, Gordon Brown, who must now do without the consummate skills of his chief spin-doctor at the Treasury

SIX CABINET MEMBERS WHO FELT THE LASH OF WHELAN'S TONGUE



ROBIN COOK

An "avid enemy" of Mr Brown, the Foreign Secretary believes he fell to spin that he was "soft" on spending, as the Chancellor's man highlighted the lavish residences enjoyed by Britain's ambassadors abroad.



JACK CUNNINGHAM

Furious about Treasury briefings against him while he was Minister of Agriculture, in his new job as the Cabinet's "enforcer", he was in a position to demand revenge.



PETER MANDELSON

He was convinced that the leak of his £373,000 home loan from the former paymaster-general, Geoffrey Robinson, was the culmination of a five-year guerrilla war conducted against him by Mr Whelan.



MO MOWLAM

The Northern Ireland Secretary was angered that journalists were encouraged to play down the Chancellor's trip to Ulster last year and to concentrate on problems facing Robin Cook - an old enemy of Mr Brown.



CHRIS SMITH

Hostility to Mr Whelan dates back to Mr Smith's days as opposition social security spokesman, when he woke up to hear Radio 4 announce a policy change about child benefit of which he was unaware.



JACK STRAW

With Robin Cook, he blamed Mr Whelan for "cooking up" with a journalist plans to privatise the Tote. As Home Secretary, it was Mr Straw's area of responsibility and Mr Cook is a horse racing fan; neither knew anything of the plan.

this time, Mr Mandelson believes, his enemy overplayed his hand.

A friend of Mr Mandelson said yesterday: "They aimed to badly wound him, not to kill him off. But at least his resignation may not now be in vain. The fact that Charlie is going too gives the Government a chance to lance the boil."

Even ministers who have defended Mr Whelan since Mr Mandelson's departure had their private grudges. Margaret Beckett, Leader of the Commons, was furious at the Treasury's spinning against her when she was drawing up policy on the minimum wage and trade union recognition.

John Prescott, Deputy Prime Minister, has mended his fences with Mr Brown but allies say he has not forgiven Mr Whelan for rubbing his fight, when in opposition, against Mr Brown's plans to set up a "super Treasury".

Alastair Campbell, Mr Blair's press secretary, paid a warm tribute to Mr Whelan yesterday, saying he had played a

key role in opposition and government and predicting he would find a good new job.

However, Whitehall insiders insist that behind the scenes, Mr Campbell, who is Mr Blair's closest aide, had persuaded the Prime Minister that Mr Whelan had to go. "Alastair made it perfectly clear he would not work with Charlie, as did other senior people in Number 10," said one source.

Mr Whelan knew he had little credit in the bank with Downing Street or the cabinet ministers whose feathers he had ruffled over the years. He told friends yesterday: "I often got the blame for briefing against people when I was totally innocent. It was because I played hard; politics is a rough game."

Allies insisted he had been thinking since last autumn that it was time to move on after five years in the "24-hours-a-day" Treasury job.

Mr Whelan insisted he had not been forced out, but had decided to quit on Sunday on the train journey back from a walk-

ing holiday in Scotland. Although he tried to avoid newspapers, his break had been constantly interrupted by speculation about his future, and he realised he had committed the cardinal sin of the spin-doctor: "I had become the story," he told friends yesterday.

Although aides of the Chancellor insist that Mr Whelan's departure was not enforced by Mr Blair, Mr Brown was in regular contact with the Prime Minister last week during his family holiday in the Seychelles, when they are bound to have discussed Mr Whelan's position.

Mr Blair is believed to have tried to persuade Mr Brown to dispense with Mr Whelan's services on at least two occasions - the first was immediately after the 1997 general election.

Six months later Mr Blair was over-enthusiastic briefings about government policy on the single currency caused problems for sterling. He was spotted by the Liberal Democrats briefing journalists on his mobile phone from the Red

Lion pub, his favourite haunt opposite the Treasury.

Mr Blair hit the roof again a year ago when Mr Whelan helped Mr Routledge to write an authorised biography of the Chancellor, which revealed his continuing bitterness at not becoming Labour leader when Mr Blair succeeded the late John Smith in 1994.

On these occasions, Mr Brown stuck loyally to his spin-doctor. But the shockwaves caused by the resignation of Mr Mandelson before Christmas - whether or not Mr Whelan was involved - appear to have changed the Chancellor's mind.

While Mr Brown professed publicly that he was "relaxed" over the speculation, in private he showed his first doubts about his loyal aide. "We just can't have another week like that," he told Mr Whelan after the media feeding frenzy that followed Mr Mandelson's resignation.

"Gordon had always seen Charlie as a huge asset. For the first time, he realised that he might be a liability, and that he

was damaging the Government and Gordon himself," said a Treasury source.

Mr Whelan, a 44-year-old football fanatic and season ticket-holder at Spurs, was educated at a minor public school, Ottershaw, but reports that he adopted his Cockney accent as a wide of the mark. After a brief and unhappy spell as a City trader, the former Communist became press officer for the AEEU engineering union, working for Jimmy Airlie, a left-wing official and his hero and political mentor. Ironically, Mr Mandelson was heavily involved in Mr Whelan's move to Mr Brown's staff in 1994, just before John Smith's death fractured their relationship.

As he successfully remodelled Mr Brown's image, Mr Whelan's relations with Westminster journalists had plenty of ups and downs. He was seen as a valuable source, and great fun, especially after a few spritzers. But some journalists complained that he was unreliable, pointing to pre-Budget steers that deliberately misled

for example, that the middle-classes would be squeezed - so that the actual event got headlines such as "Brown spares middle classes."

Such tricks worked, but Mr Whelan made more enemies. His reputation was not enhanced by a documentary in

which he was filmed hectoring journalists over the phone. After one conversation, he turned to the camera and quipped: "You have to be economical with the truth sometimes," adding with a smile: "You should never lie, but it's very difficult."

Brown's ever-decreasing inner circle

BY ANDREW GRICE

THE DEPARTURE of Charlie Whelan removes another key player from the inner circle of Gordon Brown, whose power-base has been progressively weakened by Tony Blair.

The Chancellor has now seen three of his closest allies moved from their jobs. Against his wishes, Mr Blair moved Nick Brown from the pivotal job of Chief Whip to Minister of Agriculture last July.

Last month, Geoffrey Robinson - the Treasury minister closest to Mr Brown and regarded by the Chancellor as his "wise uncle" - was forced to resign after a series of allegations over his business career before he became Paymaster-General.

Now Mr Brown is to part company with the press secretary who has assiduously - and sometimes over-zealously - reshaped and built up his image for the past five years.

Mr Brown may have finally judged that his spin-doctor's

continued presence might have stretched relations with the Prime Minister to breaking point.

Mr Blair was justifiably irritated that "Mr Brown's allies" - presumed to be Mr Whelan - described the Chancellor as the managing director who ran the Government and Mr Blair

as the non-executive chairman, a kind of smiling front man.

A member of the Blair camp said yesterday: "There can only ever be one Prime Minister. Gordon has got to learn that."

Now ministers hope Mr Whelan's departure will enable Mr Blair and Mr Brown to draw a line under their past differences, which stem from Mr Brown's disappointment that

Mr Blair became Labour leader after John Smith died in 1994. They also believe it will be easier for Mr Brown to achieve a long-promised reconciliation with Mr Mandelson, whom he has not forgiven for backing Mr Blair in 1994.

"Gordon makes enemies; he always seems to want to give people a bloody nose," said a cabinet minister. With Mr Whe-

lan no longer on the scene, ministers say they will find out how much of the Brown camp's aggression was due to the spin-doctor's style and how much he was merely acting on his master's orders.

Mr Blair's allies want Mr Brown to cement his relationship with the Prime Minister rather than build on his alliance with John Prescott, after

their agreement to reassert traditional Labour values since Mr Mandelson's departure. "He has much more in common with Tony than Prescott," said one insider.

Friends insist Mr Brown will prove a loyal and dependable Chancellor, and can become one of the most successful this century.

Mr Blair and Mr Brown are well aware of the dangers to both of them: Baroness Thatcher's allies believe she never recovered from the resignation of Nigel Lawson as Chancellor after a series of battles between No 10 and No 11. A year later, she was forced out.

So Mr Blair and Mr Brown have every incentive to draw a line under the destabilising events of recent weeks. "Their relationship is either the rock on which the Government is built, or the rock into which the whole enterprise is shipwrecked," said an ally of Mr Brown.

WHELAN'S STATEMENT OF RESIGNATION

"Having returned from holiday and looked carefully at the press coverage of the last 10 days, I want to make it absolutely clear that I was not responsible for disclosing any information about Peter Mandelson's mortgage and I refute any suggestion that I was.

"I do, however, take the view that the job of press secretary becomes extremely difficult if the press secretary, and not the department he serves, becomes the story and the subject of excessive attention.

"It is absurd that, on the day the euro starts

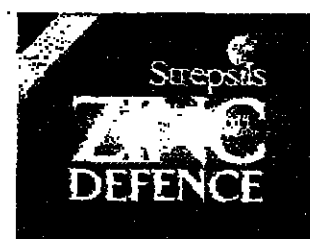
trading, in the week the Monetary Policy Committee is meeting and when the Chancellor is working on a number of important initiatives for the new year, that there is such attention focused on me.

"Therefore, as soon as an appropriate

opportunity becomes available, I will move but, in the meantime, I will continue to do my job at the Treasury to the best of my ability, promoting the New Labour policies on which Tony Blair and Gordon Brown have worked so closely for so long."



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Stars rally to support Grade's 'fobbed off' aunt



Sir Cameron Mackintosh: Theatrical impresario

BY TARA CONLAN

THE MEDIA and theatre impresarios Michael Grade and Sir Cameron Mackintosh are embroiled in a dispute over the renaming of the Prince of Wales Theatre in the West End of London.

The pair have been accused of stalling on a promise to rename the theatre after its former owner Lord Delfont, the late uncle of Mr Grade and a mentor of Sir Cameron.

Lady Delfont, whose husband ran the Prince of Wales, said she "was in despair" over the delay. She is backed by an impressive array of show-business stars including the actor Sir John Mills and the comedian Norman Wisdom.

Theatre insiders say that Mr Grade, the former head of Channel 4, and Sir Cameron, who are both on the board of the company that owns the theatre, have had second thoughts as the name Prince of Wales is more marketable.

Neither Mr Grade nor Sir Cameron would comment other than to say that no date



The Prince of Wales Theatre, and its former owner, the late Lord Delfont

has been set for the renaming. Lady Delfont said the change was promised three years ago.

She said: "I'm in despair about it. They keep putting it off. It is very upsetting. I just keep getting fobbed off. I don't know whether I'll live to see it. People forget so easily. I don't see why they go on waiting. It's not right."

Sir John Mills said there was "no doubt whatsoever" that the change should go ahead, adding he was "sure it would meet with great approval from the entire profession". He was supported by Norman Wisdom, fellow co-

median Russ Abbott and the singer Frankie Vaughan, who said it was "insensitive and indecent" not to reveal when the change would take place.

Lord Delfont was a show-business giant, working right up until his death from a heart attack at the age of 84 in 1994. To millions he was the man who escorted the Queen into the Royal Variety Performance. With his two brothers, Lew and Leslie Grade, he dominated the entertainment world for years, bringing over American stars such as Judy Garland to perform in London. He also founded the leisure

company First Leisure, which owns 50 per cent of Delfont Mackintosh. Cameron Mackintosh owns the other half.

One close friend of Lord Delfont, who did not wish to be named, said: "Why don't Grade and Mackintosh just allay people's fears and tell us when it's going to happen?"

"Delfont founded Delfont Mackintosh [the company that owns the Prince of Wales] and helped Cameron a lot. Delfont was Michael Grade's uncle, for goodness sake. You would have thought the pair of them would be shouting from the rooftops about this."



Michael Grade: Accused of stalling on a promise

Railways struggle to agree timetable

RAIL PASSENGERS may not be able to plan their journeys over one of the year's busiest holiday seasons because the industry is struggling to put together a timetable.

Railtrack and the train operators have just four days to finalise the Easter timetable before incurring the wrath of the Rail Regulator. The industry admits the timetable is still not complete.

The companies were recently reprimanded for failing to organise services for the Christmas and New Year periods. As a last resort, they can be fined.

Under the complex system for regulating the privatised industry, the train companies and Railtrack must agree 12 weeks in advance which services will run and which will be cancelled for engineering work. This is to allow travellers to be able to book with confidence.

The Regulator, Chris Bolt, is worried the industry will not hit the target for Good Friday, which this year falls on 2 April. Under the rule - known as T minus 12 - passengers should be able to book for the Friday holiday from 9 January. The industry has another week to hit the deadline for Easter Monday.

A spokeswoman for Railtrack said that where it had had bids from train operating companies (TOCs) it was "likely" the great majority of the timetable would be complete in time. But she added: "We have a few bits and bobs outstanding. There are some TOCs where we are actively working and there are some delays in the bidding system. We are hoping that it will be mostly uploaded on to the system for booking. The industry is working very hard on this one."

BY PHILIP THORNTON
Transport Correspondent

A spokesman for Mr Bolt said: "T minus 12 is not just for Christmas, it is for the whole year round, but there are obvious pinch points such as half-term holidays and Easter. Our concerns still exist because the processes are not right yet to enable T minus 12 to be a reliable programme." But he said early signs showed the industry was better prepared than it was 13 weeks before Christmas.

The Office of the Rail Regulator has called for a comprehensive review to improve the system, which was started by the Conservative government five years ago. The regulator's spokesman admitted T minus 12 was a "trifle optimistic" but said the 12-week period itself was not up for renegotiation.

The problem stems from the fact that Railtrack, which has an ambitious engineering programme, uses bank holidays to carry out maintenance work to avoid disrupting commuters. Meanwhile, train firms want to run more services to attract new passengers.

The 25 train companies currently face a separate threat of a fine from Mr Bolt. They will be fined £500,000 unless they improve markedly the telephone inquiry service, which has not met performance targets.

Railtrack has offered to donate up to £10,000 to charity after an administrative error led to north London residents being given just one week's notice of 60 hours of noisy engineering work over Christmas. The company carried out "unavoidably noisy" work - involving drills, cranes and floodlights - along the West Coast main line near Priories Hill.

Stalker jailed for 6-year campaign

A FORMER Royal Navy petty officer who has stalked a woman for six years and is said to have "destroyed" her life was jailed for four months yesterday.

It is the fourth time Anthony Burstow, 39, has been sent to prison for harassing Tracey Morgan, 30.

Burstow was jailed for three years in March 1996 after being convicted of inflicting psychological grievous bodily harm on his victim in a case that set a precedent and which played a part in the introduction of anti-stalking laws in 1997.

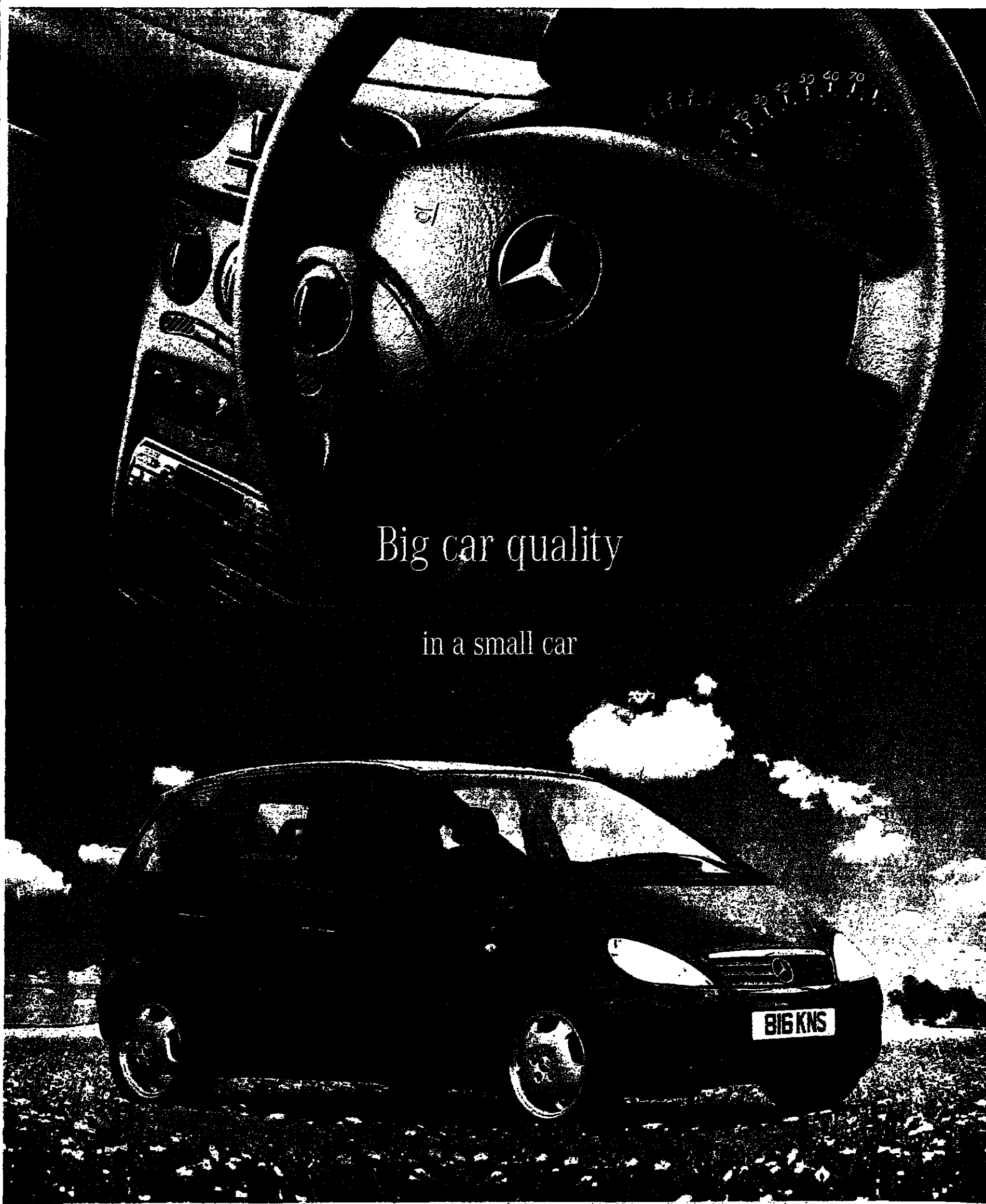
Magistrates at Bracknell, Berkshire, jailed Burstow yesterday for 16 weeks. He had been found guilty at an earlier hearing of harassing Ms Morgan. The bench also banned him from entering Berkshire, where his victim lives, or from

BY JASON BENNETTO
Crime Correspondent

communicating with Ms Morgan, her family or friends. The court was told he had confined his stalking campaign against her after being released from prison on licence in June 1997.

In January last year, Burstow sent Ms Morgan a birthday card, and parked his car near her home in Crowthorne, breaking the conditions of his parole. Previously he had bombarded her with telephone calls and letters, broken into her home, stolen her underwear and followed her.

Outside the court, Ms Morgan said: "Justice has been done today but... I just feel there are so many loopholes in the legal system that need to be addressed and highlighted."



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Third pupil contracts meningitis

A TEENAGER who used to attend the school where two friends died of meningitis is thought to have contracted the disease.

Louise Salmons, 16, was undergoing tests at Barnsley District General Hospital yesterday where she was said to be in a stable condition.

She was a pupil of Wath Comprehensive School near Rotherham, Yorkshire, until June and remained a member of the same social circle as the school's two meningitis victims. Claire Wilkinson, 14, and her friend Adam Rawson, 15, both died from the meningococcal C strain on New Year's Eve.

Dr Tim Patterson, Rotherham's director of public health, said Louise was being treated as a probable case of meningitis infection.

He added: "What actually kills people is septicaemia, which is blood poisoning. You can get it from any of the bacterial forms of meningitis."

"In Rotherham, we have seen a lot of septicaemia, which seems to be C strain. The teenage age group do seem to have a higher fatality rate - it seems to strike them down."

All 1,700 pupils at the school at Wath-on-Deane were given antibiotics at the weekend in an

BY LOUISE JURY

attempt to combat the spread of germs.

After the form of meningitis was identified as one that can be vaccinated against, an immunisation programme was launched at the school yesterday. The school is to remain closed today as a mark of respect and pupils will return to lessons tomorrow.

Michelle Dowdall, whose 12-year-old son Liam is at the school, said she was very impressed with the steps that had been taken since the deaths.

"I am shocked to think what has happened is on our doorstep. I am a bit worried but very impressed that they have agreed to immunise the children which is a good step."

"My son is OK. He is taking it all in his stride. Kids do - it's the parents who tend to worry."

Dawn Johnson, who has a 12-year-old daughter at the school, said: "We were worried before but now we have seen everything and they have explained it all we feel better."

Robert Godber, head teacher at Wath Comprehensive, said parents and pupils had reacted with a "calm dignity" to the tragedy.

"I have seen no anger, no ir-

ritation, no hysteria. That strikes me as a very remarkable reflection on the community here. Obviously people are anxious, but they have all been absolutely splendid."

Meningitis can be viral or bacterial. Anne-Marie Delrosa of the National Meningitis Trust said it was the bacterial form that could kill. The A strain was rarely seen in the UK, B was the main cause of bacterial meningitis, with C the second cause.

A rash that does not disappear when pressed firmly is the distinctive feature, but flu-like symptoms alone can indicate meningitis infection. Cases have been on the increase for the past decade although there was a slight drop towards the end of 1998.

This time of the year sees the highest incidence of the disease. Yesterday it was reported that a six-year-old boy from Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, was thought to have died of meningitis C on 29 December. A suspected meningitis patient, a 38-year-old woman, was flown 180 miles from Arrows Park Hospital in the Wirral to North Tees General in Middlesbrough because no other intensive care bed was available.

The National Meningitis Trust has an information helpline on 0845 6000800.



Selina Haagenson: Asking where her daddy is

Martin Ricketts

Britain refuses girl entry to see father

THE FOREIGN Office is refusing to allow a two-year-old British girl to come to this country to see her father for the first time because he is a prison inmate.

Selina Haagenson, who will be three in July, was born in the Philippines, shortly after her father, Paul, a Yorkshire businessman, was arrested and jailed in Britain. Her family say that although the girl has British citizenship, Foreign Office staff are refusing to give her a passport.

But Stephen Thornton, of the NHS Confederation representing health authorities and trusts, said the current problems in hospitals were not principally the result of the flu outbreak. "Every year, this is the busiest week of the health service year - everybody puts off their illness and then rushes to the doctor after the holiday period," he said. The unique factor this winter was the significant shortage of staff, particularly nurses. "That is the special ingredient," he said.

BY IAN BURRELL
Home Affairs Correspondent

Haagenson's mother, Frieda, said immigration officials had been allowed to examine the family's finances. She said there was a self-contained apartment within her Blackpool home where she wished her daughter-in-law to stay. "Rosalee is a lovely, well-educated girl and was absolutely heartbroken when Paul was arrested," Mrs Haagenson, 73, said. "I have spoken to her many times on the telephone and Selina is now asking where her daddy is and pointing to his photograph."

The decision to refuse the visa application was taken at the British embassy in Manila. In a letter, the embassy's entry clearance officer stated: "I am not satisfied that each of the parties intend to live permanently with each other as husband and wife. Further-

more, I am not satisfied that there will be adequate accommodation for you and your spouse without recourse to public funds in accommodation which you and your spouse own or occupy exclusively." He adds that he does not believe the couple will in future be able to maintain themselves without access to public funds.

But in a letter from Wymouth prison in Lancashire where he is serving a 10-year sentence for smuggling cannabis, Haagenson, 46, accused the Foreign Office of basing its decision "on the level of a fortune teller with a crystal ball".

His family said he still owns a house in North Yorkshire, where he intends to rebuild his former business, selling traditional stoves and cookers.

His wife, who has been refused five applications for visas, said: "I feel our treatment is inhumane and not that of a civilised country."

Vaccine averted flu chaos

MEDICAL SURVEILLANCE in Britain may have prevented a far worse outbreak of flu than the one currently sweeping the country, experts said yesterday.

The Sydney flu, which forced more than 45,000 people to take to their beds over Christmas, was detected in a handful of cases last winter and incorporated into the flu vaccine given to the elderly and vulnerable in the autumn.

Dr Douglas Fleming, of the flu monitoring unit of the Royal College of General Practitioners, said: "If it wasn't in the vaccine strain, the outbreak of flu now would most certainly have been worse. But because we have good surveillance in place, it was picked up last winter."

His unit reported 93 cases of flu for every 100,000 people for the week to 27 December. The latest figures from the Public Health Laboratory Service show 103 cases per 100,000 in

BY LOUISE JURY

northern and central England with only 41 in the South.

A rate of fewer than 50 cases per 100,000 people is commonplace in winter, between 50 and 200 is usual when flu viruses are circulating, and more than 200 is rated as above average. Above 400 is "exceptional" and regarded as an epidemic.

Dr Fleming said he expected to see the figures rise significantly as the Sydney flu and more cases of the Peking flu, which caused problems last winter, hit the South.

"We have seen it rise in the North and central regions, but up to now not in the South. I cannot think that's a situation that can continue - I expect a sharp increase in the South."

Simon Barber, of the Public Health Laboratory Service, said both strains now prevalent in Britain caused the aches and pains associated with the

illness. "If you have flu, you tend to know it and be totally knocked out. The best thing to do is get to bed, drink liquids and take medication to relieve the symptoms."

A spokesman for SmithKline Beecham, which makes cold and flu remedies, said: "There was certainly a significant sales increase in the run-up to Christmas and this has continued to accelerate."

But Stephen Thornton, of the NHS Confederation representing health authorities and trusts, said the current problems in hospitals were not principally the result of the flu outbreak. "Every year, this is the busiest week of the health service year - everybody puts off their illness and then rushes to the doctor after the holiday period," he said. The unique factor this winter was the significant shortage of staff, particularly nurses. "That is the special ingredient," he said.

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Green activists occupy offices

THE LONDON headquarters of Shell, the oil multinational, and of London Underground were both occupied yesterday by separate groups of environmental activists.

Thirteen demonstrators took over offices belonging to Shell in a protest against the company's operations in Nigeria, while nearly 20 green activists occupied London Underground's headquarters in protest at the Government's plans to privatise parts of the Tube network.

The Shell protesters said they were acting in sympathy with the Igbo people in the Niger delta, who are in dispute with the company, other big oil firms and the provincial gov-

BY MICHAEL MCCARTHY
AND LINUS GREGORIADIS

ernment over the way the oil business is run locally.

Demonstrations by Igbo groups have led to fatal clashes with the Nigerian security forces in the past week. Police said six Igbo have died but activists said at least 26 people have been killed since 30 December, and yesterday one report from Nigeria said the death toll had reached 240.

The Igbo are demanding that the oil companies apply better environmental standards to their operations, and want them to leave the area until this is agreed.

Yesterday's demonstrators,

who described themselves as "three groups of environmental and human rights protesters" without giving further details, took over management offices of Shell UK in Shell-Mex House in the Strand at 9am. They claimed to be occupying the offices of Chris Fry, the retiring chairman and chief executive, and Malcolm Brinded, his successor. They were removed and arrested by police four hours later on suspicion of causing criminal damage.

Activists from the organisation Reclaim The Streets (RTS) entered London Underground's headquarters above St James's Park Tube station yesterday morning to protest at the

public-private partnership intended for the Underground, which they say will lead to price increases and fewer people using public transport.

"Despite the fact that the privatisation of British Rail is now recognised as a disaster New Labour is proceeding with plans to sell off parts of the Tube network," said an RTS spokesman.

"It is estimated that the privatisation process will cost around £100m. This could be much better spent on improving the service."

London Underground confirmed yesterday that 15 to 20 protesters had entered their headquarters and were later led away by police officers.

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Man quizzed over attacks on women

A MAN was being held last night in connection with the kidnap and assault of a mother and her teenage daughter while they were walking their dog on New Year's Eve.

Detectives are also examining possible links between the man, who is in his 40s, and the murders of Kate Bushell, a 14-year-old girl from Exeter, and Lynda Bryant, a 41-year-old Cornish woman, who were killed in the past 14 months.

The suspect was arrested at about 6pm on Sunday in Torquay in connection with the attack on the mother and daughter in Netherton, near Newton Abbot, Devon.

The arrest followed the recovery of a Vauxhall Cavalier fitting the description of the car used by the attacker. Police said they found the vehicle in the Lichfield Avenue area of the town and were carrying out forensic science tests on it.

The 48-year-old woman and her 17-year-old daughter were assaulted as they walked their black Labrador in a country lane near Netherton.

The attacker deliberately drove his car into the girl, knocking her down, according to the police. Mother and daughter were then driven to a field where the girl grabbed the man round the neck and

BY JASON BENNETTO
Crime Correspondent

woman struggled to get out of the car. The man allegedly lashed out with a knife, badly cutting the woman's hands.

They ran to a house to raise the alarm, and the mother was taken to hospital in Plymouth where the wounds to her hands were treated. She may need plastic surgery.

Police later praised the pair for their bravery.

The man being held at Torquay police station was undergoing forensic science examinations yesterday and detectives are not expected to question him until later today.

Police are also examining similarities with two recent murders in the South-west.

Mrs Bryant, a mother of two, from the hamlet of Ruan High Lanes, was killed last October. She was seen talking to a man less than an hour before her body was discovered in a field. She was stabbed in the back, neck and throat.

Miss Bushell had her throat cut while walking near her home in Exeter, Devon, in November 1997.

Both victims were walking dogs along country lanes. In each case the motive is thought to have been sexual but there

was no actual sexual assault. In the Bushell case the police are still looking for a light blue Vauxhall Astra van and in the Bryant case they are still searching for a white van.

A police spokesman said: "There has been liaison between the officers of the Newton Abbot offence and officers involved in the outstanding murders in Devon and Cornwall." He added: "They all involve a woman taking a dog for a walk along a country lane."

Police have also examined unsolved murders carried out in other parts of the country, but no links have yet been discovered with the Devon and Cornwall offences.



Pigeons in London's Trafalgar Square meet 'Cirque de Soleil' cast members who will be appearing at the Royal Albert Hall Mark Chilvers

Martin Rickett

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Lawyer touts for trade on beer-mats

A LAWYER who believes most of his clients end up in trouble after drinking too much has started advertising his services on beer-mats.

Andy Lyall, a senior partner with the firm of Lyall & Co in Dundee, said his marketing ploy had won him dozens of new clients, but the Scottish Law Society was more wary. It wants to see the mats, which have been distributed around the city's pubs, before giving approval to the scheme.

Mr Lyall, 52, defended his use of the beer-mats, which bear his photograph, telephone number, address and the words "defence lawyer".

"Many of my clients end up in trouble because they have too much to drink so the pub seems to me to be an eminently sensible place to advertise," he said yesterday.

"I am aware that some members of the legal profession might be a bit stuffy about this and I have heard of some muttering but I believe I have acted in accordance with Law Society advertising regulations. In an increasingly competitive market place it is important to use imaginative marketing techniques to promote business and that is what I am doing."

BY KATE WATSON-SMYTH

Douglas Mill, the secretary of the Law Society, said Mr Lyall had not sought approval for the unorthodox advertising campaign.

"This probably doesn't infringe our advertising regulations but I would like to see the mats first," he said.

"This is certainly the first I have heard of anything like this. It's possible that a lot of solicitors might deem it naïf and not in accordance with the dignity of the profession, and if any member of the public thinks it is unprofessional they can bring it to our attention."

"It doesn't sound illegal but I don't think it is something that will fill the rest of the profession with joy."

Mike Halford, the owner of one of the pubs using the beer-mats, said most customers had been amused by them.

"They have caused quite a stir and most people have had a good laugh about it."

"We are always telling people not to drink and drive but if they don't listen they can always avail themselves of Mr Lyall's services as advertised on the beer-mats."

TERENCE BLACKER

I suddenly realised 'South Park' had some undeniably disgusting moments

IN THE TUESDAY REVIEW PAGE 4

informative:

With effect from 5 January 1999, the following interest rates will apply:

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£1 to £499	3.50%	3.10%	3.06%
£500 to £2,499	4.10%	3.80%	3.54%
£2,500 and over	4.60%	4.10%	4.03%
Direct Interest Savings Account			
	Previous Rate	New Rate	
	AER	AER	Gross %p.a.
Credit Interest			
Interest paid quarterly			
£1 to £2,499	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%
£2,500 to £4,999	1.10%	0.80%	0.58%
£5,000 to £9,999	1.25%	0.75%	0.53%
£10,000 and over	1.50%	0.60%	0.47%

AER: Annual Equivalent Rate is a national rate which illustrates what the gross rate would be if interest was paid and compounded each year.

Tax free: the rate payable where the interest is exempt from the tax applicable to interest on savings.

Gross: the rate before the deduction of tax applicable to interest on savings.

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Markets welcome single currency

THE FINANCIAL markets gave the euro a warm welcome on its trading debut yesterday with the stock markets of the 11 participating nations soaring more than 6 per cent in anticipation of massive amounts of money flowing into European markets over the coming months.

Milan was the best performer, soaring 6.44 per cent on the local Mib30 index, with Madrid, Frankfurt and Paris all registering gains of more than 5 per cent on the day.

The broking houses are predicting that over the next few months the big pension funds dominating the financial markets will start shifting their portfolios to take into account the fact that for these countries

By ANDREW GARFIELD
Financial Editor

there is effectively just one, \$10trillion capital market in which to invest.

David Bowers at Merrill Lynch, the American investment bank said: "We expect EMU [economic and monetary union] to lead to significant changes in investor and corporate behaviour." Investors, he added, will no longer be constrained by currency in choosing whether shares in an Italian company for example, offer better value than a German firm.

The euro itself had a good first day's trading, rising nearly three-quarters of a per cent against the dollar to \$1.1792

compared with the initial reference rate of \$1.16675 set by European Union finance ministers on New Year's Eve.

Investors' enthusiasm for the "euroland" markets was in sharp contrast to the lacklustre performance of London's FTSE index which closed 3.2 down at 5879.4 on the first day's trading of the year. Sterling too, had a poor day, slipping one fifth of a penny to 0.7109 euros in what many fear will be a foretaste of life on the margins of the new euro area.

"The euro has had a very auspicious start," said Nick Parsons, City economist at

FINANCIAL AND POLITICAL REACTION



An anti-euro protester in the City yesterday

Paribas, the leading French bank. "The volume has been less than on a normal Monday but not a great deal less than

you would expect on the first trading day after the New Year." He added: "The pound has performed like a dog. Ster-

ling risks being marginalised as more and more companies switch to presenting their accounts in euro."

Dealers said that many investors were deliberately choosing to put through small orders just to test the system.

"Normally we would see thirty to forty deals of \$100m or so. Today there have been lots of \$1m, \$2m and \$5m," Mr Parsons said.

The bond markets saw their first "euro-euro" issue - a 500 million euro bond issued jointly by Nomura, ABN-Amro and Deutsche Bank on behalf of the DSL, a German region-

al bank. The real test of the depth and liquidity of the euro bond market will come this week when the German government launches its first euro denominated issue.

Banks reported that the changeover weekend had gone without a hitch, with some completing the process earlier than planned. One big German bank, Commerzbank, had had to call in 200 computer staff on Sunday to iron out a mismatch between the bank's software and some healthcare programmes in Frankfurt. The head of trading later called his opposite numbers at other banks to reassure them the bank would be ready to trade on time yesterday morning.

James Tompkinson, who headed the unit responsible for euro conversion at the London offices of Nomura, the Japanese bank, said yesterday that some investors were clearly hanging back. "Trading is relatively slow but then that is normal for the first day back after a long New Year's holiday. There have been no mishaps," Mr Tompkinson said.

In Frankfurt which, next to London, has been the financial centre most in the spotlight because it is home to the new European Central Bank, dealers reported trading running at around a quarter of normal.

"It has gone far more smoothly than any of us dared hope," Mr Parsons said.

Sea change will redraw landscape

HISTORY'S VERDICT on the success or failure of the euro will rest on the power of the competitive forces it unleashes. For unless European business becomes more productive, and consumers enjoy lower prices, there is no economic rationale for the single currency.

But beneath the blanket economic gains for Europe will lie winners and losers in different industries.

The removal of the obstacle of national exchange rates will redraw the industrial landscape of the entire continent.

Successful industries tend to concentrate in particular geographical clusters. The phenomenon has been documented by leading management experts such as Harvard University's Michael Porter or Oxford's John Kay, and was emphasised in the Government's recent White Paper on competitiveness.

But the boundaries imposed by the existence of separate national currencies has meant that Europe has had far more centres of excellence in every industry than the United

By DIANE COYLE
Economics Editor

States. EU businesses have therefore generally been much less productive than their US counterparts because they have been unable to exploit the same economies of producing on a large scale.

All this is changing with the launch of a true single market of nearly 300 million people.

Countries that already enjoy a geographical concentration of particular industries within their borders will probably cement that advantage.

Their rivals stand to lose whole industries as Europe comes to look much more like the US.

This is particularly true in heavy industry such as steel production or car manufacture, where the costs of building and running the plant and equipment are high, and businesses such as pharmaceuticals, which require big investment in research and development.

The member countries already have particular strengths

WHO WILL BE THE WINNERS AND LOSERS IN THE NEW EUROPE?

Cars	Engineering	Financial services	Pharmaceuticals	Retailing	Textiles
<p>Car makers should see some of the most dramatic gains from a single currency as all have cross-border operations, which have suffered from the vagaries of exchange rate changes. But it could see more consolidation into one or two regions than most other industries as the economies of scale in car production are so great. After all, the US has only Detroit.</p> <p>Winners: Germany, Italy</p>	<p>The European engineering industry is a patchwork of businesses ranging from giant conglomerates to family firms, and is ripe for consolidation. Germany has a clear advantage over the rest of the EU in many areas of engineering, especially in mechanical engineering although less so in high-technology electronics.</p> <p>Winners: Germany</p>	<p>London sees more foreign exchange dealing than anywhere else in the world and has the biggest EU stock market. But there is a big question mark over whether staying out of the euro will harm London's lead. The big European banks are expected to grow even bigger through cross-border mergers, posing more competition to Britain.</p> <p>Winner: UK or Germany</p>	<p>This is one industry where the UK has shone. With the biggest pharmaceutical companies being in the UK, US and Switzerland the creation of a true single market ought to be an unambiguous plus for the industry leaders. The one catch will be the wide variations in price across the EU. Prices are likely to fall to the lowest European levels.</p> <p>Winner: UK</p>	<p>Retailers will be on the front line of greater competition and price transparency. Shoppers will be unwilling to tolerate big differences in costs. The French supermarkets have so far been the most aggressive about pricing competitively in euros and expanding into other countries. Outsiders such as America's Wal-Mart also plan to invade the euro countries.</p> <p>Winner: France</p>	<p>Europe has two countries that still have a significant textiles and clothing industry, the UK and Italy. Italy has concentrated on up-market items. Britain has tended to remain embroiled in low-cost developing economies. Italy's clothing industry is one of the most successful in the world. The euro will reinforce its dominance.</p> <p>Winner: Italy</p>

in certain industries. These are likely to be cemented by the arrival of the euro.

So, for example, Italy's traditional lead in textiles and leather goods, Germany's in cars and Finland's in high-technology communications

will become even more pronounced.

The UK has its own strengths, with financial services and pharmaceuticals being the most obvious.

To some extent British businesses too ought to be able to

take advantage of the creation of a big market free of boundaries. The catch is, of course, that Britain has stayed out of the first wave and, worse, remained lukewarm about joining later.

For the next few years that

is unlikely to harm the UK's star performers. In the longer term, however, even the areas of excellence in British industry could lose out to centres of competition on the mainland.

According to David Owen at Dresdner Kleinwort Benson,

the London investment bank: "If we stay out of the first wave, we'll be fine. If we stay out beyond that we will pay the penalty. The clustering will happen in the rest of Europe, even in the sectors where we have an advantage."

Analysts reckon the business earthquake will last at most five to ten years. In some industries there could be an entirely new competitive landscape before Britain has even got round to holding a referendum on whether to join.

THE LONDON BOAT SHOW

8-17 January 99

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PROUD SPONSOR OF THE BIG BLUE EXPERIENCE AT THE LONDON BOAT SHOW

New York soars into new era

By DAVID USBORNE
in New York

WALL STREET

ONE DAY the euro could become powerful enough to threaten the decades-old hegemony of the US dollar as the world's premier reserve currency, but yesterday it received an enthusiastic welcome from American investors and currency dealers.

Following the lead of European markets, shares rocketed on Wall Street, with the blue chip Dow Jones average gaining more than 150 points in

morning trading. "All eyes are on the launch of the euro," said Peter Cardillo, of Westfield Investments in New York.

On the foreign currency market, dealers greeted the debut of the new currency with studied calm. "Basically we are trying to get our bearings, memorising the new quotes so that we can rattle them off when necessary," said Mike Malpede, a senior currency analyst at Refco Group.

The outlook for the euro's value against the dollar appeared strong. "I don't know of any analyst who is negative on the euro," Mr Malpede added.

The Clinton administration has been consistently supportive of the new currency's introduction. "Some have argued that a Europe with a single number in the global directory might ultimately pose a threat to the United States," the Deputy Treasury Secretary,

Larry Summers, said recently. "But in a global economy, the United States has infinitely less to fear from an open and integrated Europe that continues to take its share in global responsibilities."

Jeffrey Shafer, a former Treasury under-secretary, said: "I don't see the euro as a real threat even if it carves out more of a share than the Deutschmark and the other European currencies combined. There are other fundamentals that will matter much more than that."

Cheap mortgages for the few

By NIP CICUTTI
Personal Finance Editor

HOME LOANS

BORROWERS HOPING to cut the cost of their home loans by taking out a euro-denominated mortgage at lower interest rates were given short shrift yesterday by the overwhelming majority of lenders.

With the exception of Barclays Bank, which launched its euro-mortgage this week, and Abbey National, which hopes to

do so in the next few weeks, no other lender was prepared to enter the fray.

All lenders cited currency risks as the main reason for declining to offer euro-mortgages. "It is the equivalent of being paid in one currency but paying off the loan in another," said a Halifax spokesman. "If currency rates move against you,

you could end up paying significantly more than through a standard mortgage."

Barclays, whose euro-loan was available yesterday, said it was restricting applications to people whose salaries are paid in euros. They will have to pay their salaries into a euro account with the bank while the loan will be restricted to 65 per

cent of the value of their home. Abbey National said it planned to operate a similarly restrictive policy.

Barclays yesterday set its euro loan at 4.7 per cent for the next 90 days, when it will be reviewed. On a £100,000 interest-only mortgage, this would mean payments of £371.88 a month. A UK-linked variable rate of 7.7 per cent would mean monthly payments of £614.50 on the same debt.

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Agreed overdraft for balances over £250	16.40%	17.0%	15.80%
Premier Cheque Account			
Overdraft Rate	Previous Rate	New Rate	
% p.a.	% EAR	% p.a.	% EAR
Agreed overdraft for balances up to £10,000	9.75%	10.1%	9.25%
Flexiloan			
Overdraft Rate	Previous Rate	New Rate	
% p.a.	% APR	% p.a.	% APR
Loans up to £10,000	18.00%	19.5%	17.40%
Mortgage			
Overdraft Rate	Previous Rate	New Rate	
% p.a.	% p.a.	% p.a.	
All loan amounts	7.75% p.a.	7.25% p.a.	
Equity Release Loan			
Overdraft Rate	Previous Rate	New Rate	
% p.a.	% p.a.	% p.a.	
All loan amounts	9.75% p.a.	9.25% p.a.	

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Elizabeth Dole 'to run' for president

WASHINGTON was abuzz with speculation yesterday that Elizabeth Dole, the 62-year-old wife of the former Republican vice-president, Bob Dole, was preparing a bid for the Presidency in the year 2000 - one of very few women to embark on a presidential race.

Mrs Dole, who was a member of the cabinet under Ronald Reagan as transport secretary and George Bush as labour secretary, was expected to resign as President of the American Red Cross, a post she has held since 1991, with a break in 1996 to support her husband's failed presidential run.

Mrs Dole has hitherto discouraged reports that she might stand herself, despite strong backing from some sections of the Republican Party, including in her home state of North Carolina, and her husband's barely concealed ambi-

BY MARY DEJEVSKY
in Washington

tions on her behalf. He has joked: "I've still got a chance to get to the White House, and that's if Elizabeth runs for President."

And while her own statements have played down the likelihood that she would run, she has never ruled it out and the high profile she has pursued recently, including a much-publicised trip to Central America after Hurricane Georges, suggested she could still be tempted.

Her immediate plans include trips to Iowa and New Hampshire, two states considered key to any presidential run because of their early party primary contests.

While few in Washington believe Mrs Dole to be a credible candidate for the presidency,

she has been widely canvassed as a possible running mate for George W Bush, the Governor of Texas and son of the former president. He is much-fancied should he decide to run.

That raises the prospect - not as dismal to Republicans, apparently, as experience might suggest - of a second Bush-Dole presidential ticket for the year 2000.

The only candidates to have filed formally to start fundraising for the next presidential contest are, on the Republican side, John McCain of Arizona, and on the Democratic side, Vice-President Al Gore, who filed papers last week, and Bill Bradley of New Jersey. John Ashcroft of Missouri, a right-wing Republican, is expected to announce his candidacy shortly, but Mr Bush is reportedly still undecided.

Mrs Dole, though often de-

scribed as a "Southern belle", has spent 25 years in government and is the only woman to have held two US cabinet posts. She appears regularly in lists of "most admired woman" in America. Last year she was third, behind Hillary Clinton and Oprah Winfrey.

But perhaps her most populist step so far was her willingness to discuss her husband's treatment with Viagra, the impotence drug. Mr Dole had revealed that as a former sufferer from prostate cancer, he had been among a trial group for the drug. Mrs Dole decorously confirmed its positive effects on her marriage.

With Bill Clinton's two election victories and his continued popularity widely attributed to his support from women, many Republicans acknowledge that a more female-friendly ticket could improve their chances.



Elizabeth and Bob Dole: Washington is abuzz with rumours that she could run for president

Prostitute's claim looms over Clinton Senate trial

WITH ONLY two days remaining before the United States Senate convenes to consider President Bill Clinton's impeachment, political pressure is mounting for a postponement of the State of the Union address, the President's annual report to the US Congress, which is scheduled for 19 January.

Several senior senators argued it would be "unseemly" for the President to deliver his report with a trial pending, or while he was on trial.

But uncertainty surrounding the State of the Union address was just one of the troubles bearing down on Mr Clinton at the start of what is expected to be a crucial week for the presidency.

While the mainstream media maintained their silence on the latest Clinton scandal-mongering, the revival of allegations that he fathered a child by a black prostitute in Arkansas was the talk of radio phone-ins and street gossip.

Danny Williams, a 13-year-old boy of mixed race, was reported to have been taken to an "undisclosed location" with his mother, Bobbie Ann, at the expense of the Star, a "supermarket" tabloid (so called because it is sold mainly in supermarkets) which is trying to establish whether there is a DNA match between the boy and the President.

Danny Williams has grown up being told by his mother that he is Bill Clinton's child, and that he was fathered during a paid-for sex encounter in the President's home state.

The long-standing rumours resurfaced at the weekend after the disclosure that the child had submitted a DNA sample to an Arkansas laboratory and that Star reporters were trying to establish whether there was a match

BY MARY DEJEVSKY
in Washington

with the sample submitted by Mr Clinton during the investigation of Monica Lewinsky's semen-stained dress.

The more immediate bad news for Mr Clinton was the continued failure of his supporters in the Senate to muster a consensus around proposals either for a censure vote or for a curtailed trial when Congress reconvenes tomorrow. While Democrats could be heartened by the fact that the main divisions were in the Republican majority, which is split about the constitutional necessity and political advisability of a trial, they were preparing to return to the Capitol with the President's future as much in question as when they broke for the Christmas recess.

If the Senate does decide to proceed, Bill Clinton would become the first president for 130 years to stand trial in the Senate.

The House of Representatives last month voted two articles of impeachment - accusing him of perjury and obstruction of justice over his affair with Ms Lewinsky, a White House trainee.

Yesterday, the White House - which is preparing simultaneously for a Senate trial and for the State of the Union address - was again stressing business as usual.

Mr Clinton appeared with his wife, Hillary, to set out new proposals for tax relief on care for the elderly and chronically ill - the latest in a series of spending announcements geared at once to influential political constituencies and the senators who will constitute the jury in the event of a trial.

IN BRIEF

Sierra Leone rebels attack capital

ARTILLERY FIRE shook the Sierra Leone capital of Freetown yesterday and Nigerian-led peacekeepers said they had repelled a rebel attack on the city's Hastings airport. Last week Nigeria boosted the force's numbers to between 15,000 and 19,000. The rebels are soldiers loyal to a military junta evicted from Freetown in February.

Chinese police torture priest

A priest in the underground Catholic church in China was arrested, imprisoned and tortured by police, including female agents who sexually assaulted him, according to the Vatican missionary news service. Fr Li Qinghua, 31, was arrested in November in Hebei province in northern China.

Burglar, 89, dies red-handed

AN 89-YEAR-OLD Swiss burglar collapsed and died in an apartment he had broken into, the police said yesterday. The man was probably killed by the sudden onset of an illness, they said. The body was discovered by the owner of the apartment, also an elderly man.

MILES KINGTON

Tiggy Legge-Bourke is the sort of name that takes centuries to develop

IN THE TUESDAY REVIEW PAGE 2

Cut out and stick on your office door

Dear Colleagues,

This Thursday I will be leaving the office at 8.00pm at the latest.

Not 8.30pm, not 8.15pm, not even 8.01pm, but 8.00pm.

This gives me a whole hour in which to get home and secure a good seat for the new series of Friends and ER.

I regret any inconvenience this may cause but unfortunately it's unavoidable.



New series of Friends and ER.
Thursday 7th January from 9pm.
See it first on Sky One.

SKY
one

Business & City Editor, Jeremy Warner
News desk: 0171-293 2636 Fax: 0171-293 2098
E-mail: IndyBusiness@Independent.co.uk

BUSINESS

Fresh signs of slowdown add to rate cut pressure

BRIEFING

Changes to 'Independent' statistics after euro launch

THE INDEPENDENT'S statistics are from today being adjusted to take account of the launch of the euro. We are also extending our coverage of international stock markets.

In the foreign exchange-rate table (published on page 17 today) spot rates against the German mark have been replaced by a column of euro cross rates. The 11 currencies in EMU still feature in this table, even though they are now fixed sub-units of the euro, to provide an easy reference point while francs, marks and other legacy currencies continue to circulate.

On the currencies table (below), the euro replaces mark rates. The ecu, which converted into the euro on a one-for-one basis, has also been replaced by the euro throughout the section, while all "year change" information for euro will be since its launch on 1 January.

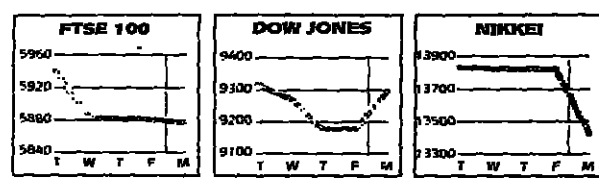
Repo and overnight rates set by the new European Central Bank for the eurozone replace the individual rates for the countries participating in economic and monetary union in the interest-rate table (page 17). The short-term money market rates listed under Germany on the interest-rate table below also apply across the eurozone.

At the moment the British Bankers' Association euro Libor rates and the European Bankers Federation's Euribor rates are competing to establish themselves as Europe's key benchmark. As *The Independent* publishes Life euro Libor futures, we have also added the euro Libor rate to the money-market rate table.

Life plans to continue trading euromark and eurolira contracts until 22 January, when they will be converted into euro Libor contracts. We will continue to publish the separate future contracts until then.

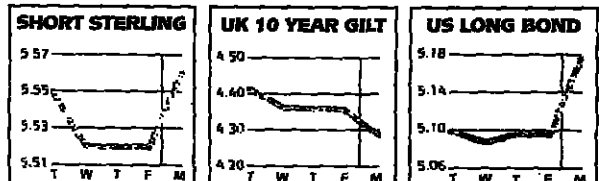


STOCK MARKETS



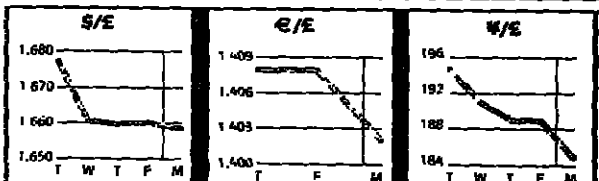
Index	Close	Change	Change (%)	52 wk high	52 wk low	Volatility (%)
FTSE 100	5878.40	-3.20	-0.05	6183.70	4599.20	2.73
FTSE 250	4851.00	-3.70	-0.08	5070.90	4247.50	3.48
FTSE 350	2770.80	-1.60	-0.06	2869.10	2210.40	2.24
FTSE All Share	2673.18	-0.76	-0.03	2869.10	2113.53	2.89
FTSE SmallCap	2082.80	-1.90	-0.09	2293.80	1834.40	3.88
FTSE Previews	1152.90	6.10	0.53	1517.10	1046.20	4.37
FTSE AIM	801.30	-0.10	-0.01	1146.90	751.30	1.26
FTSE Europe 100	2804.15	80.28	2.95	3079.27	2018.15	91.50
FTSE Europe 300	1214.04	31.30	2.65	1332.07	880.63	1.02
Dow Jones	9201.93	123.33	1.34	9380.20	7400.30	1.64
Nikkei	13415.89	-436.28	-3.08	13522.95	12787.50	1.08
Hang Seng	8809.17	-239.41	-2.70	11266.16	6544.79	3.52
Dax	5253.36	-49.97	-0.95	6217.83	3833.71	1.64
S&P 500	1242.70	13.86	1.13	1244.93	912.83	1.29
Nasdaq	2229.51	36.75	1.68	2200.63	1357.08	0.31
Toronto 300	6560.00	74.76	1.15	7837.70	5320.90	1.65
Brazil Bovespa	7000.70	214.63	3.16	12339.14	4573.69	8.16
Belgium Bel20	3645.94	131.43	3.74	3647.23	2357.78	1.79
Amsterdam Eux	558.95	20.99	3.83	600.85	366.58	1.74
Prague CAC 40	4147.50	304.84	5.20	4404.94	2809.73	1.85
Winnipeg 30	37417.00	2356.00	6.44	38170.00	24175.00	1.08
Madrid Ibex 35	10447.80	611.20	6.21	10589.80	6889.80	1.76
Tel Aviv All Share	5076.95	81.13	1.62	5581.70	3732.57	1.45
S Korea Comp	587.57	25.11	4.46	600.45	277.37	1.00
Australia ASX	2832.60	19.20	0.68	2893.70	2386.70	3.20

INTEREST RATES



Index	3 month	Yr chg	1 year	Yr chg	10 year	Yr chg	Long bond	Yr chg
UK	6.22	-1.45	5.61	-2.07	4.31	-1.96	4.26	-1.97
US	5.06	-0.75	5.09	-0.84	4.72	-	5.18	-
Japan	0.54	-0.25	0.57	-0.17	2.17	0.23	2.96	0.40
Germany	3.22	-0.41	3.20	-0.74	3.79	-1.53	4.68	-1.22

CURRENCIES



Index	3 month	Yr chg	1 year	Yr chg	10 year	Yr chg	Long bond	Yr chg
US	1.5584	-0.41c	1.5298	-	1.1823	+1.1c	1.0136	-
EURO	1.4020	-0.45c	-	-	1.1173	-3.77	133.42	-
YEN	185.06	+2.82	217.71	-	103.90	0.00	109.70	-
£ index	99.70	0.00	104.50	-	-	-	-	-

OTHER INDICATORS

Index	3 month	Yr chg	1 year	Yr chg	10 year	Yr chg	Long bond	Yr chg
Brent Oil (\$)	10.53	-0.04	15.84	-	115.40	3.00	112.04	Mar
Gold (\$)	286.85	-1.40	-	-	154.40	3.00	159.51	Jan
Silver (\$)	5.00	-0.01	5.94	-	6.25	7.25	-	-

TOURIST RATES

Index	3 month	Yr chg	1 year	Yr chg	10 year	Yr chg	Long bond	Yr chg
Australia (\$)	2.6238	-	-	-	14.78	-	-	-
Austria (schillings)	18.91	-	-	-	3.0308	-	-	-
Belgium (francs)	55.07	-	-	-	3.0202	-	-	-
Canada (\$)	2.4898	-	-	-	12.21	-	-	-
Cyprus (pounds)	0.7982	-	-	-	271.10	-	-	-
Denmark (krone)	10.20	-	-	-	6.0625	-	-	-
Finland (markka)	8.2586	-	-	-	2.6203	-	-	-
France (francs)	9.0355	-	-	-	228.84	-	-	-
Germany (marks)	2.7035	-	-	-	9.4175	-	-	-
Greece (drachma)	453.56	-	-	-	12.08	-	-	-
Hong Kong (\$)	12.50	-	-	-	2.081	-	-	-
Ireland (pounds)	1.0832	-	-	-	55.43	-	-	-
India (rupees)	63.45	-	-	-	505094	-	-	-
Israel (shekels)	6.4360	-	-	-	1.6253	-	-	-
Italy (lira)	2677	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Japan (yen)	184.02	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Malaysia (ringgits)	6.0528	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Malta (lira)	0.6057	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

BY DIANE COYLE
Economics Editor

PROSPECTS OF lower interest rates in both Europe and the UK increased yesterday following fresh signs of a slowdown in the German and British economies.

On the heels of the launch of the euro, a new survey brought indications of a slowdown in Germany, the powerhouse of the European economy. The European Central Bank is expected to cut interest rates again, following the co-ordinated reduction to 3 per cent in member countries last month.

Fresh evidence that the UK is close to recession also boosted hopes that the Bank of England will reduce the cost of borrowing from the current 6.25 per cent, either on Thursday or after next month's meeting of its Monetary Policy Committee.

The purchasing managers survey suggested that manufacturing industry contracted in December for the ninth consecutive month. The gloom was barely lifted by figures showing a record increase in credit card borrowing in November.

Thanks to these dim economic prospects and to its exclusion from euro-phoria, London was the only European market to fall on the first day of trading for the new currency. The FTSE100 index ended just over 3 points lower at 5,878.4, having fallen as much as 71 points earlier in the day.

Yet other European stockmarkets surged, while the euro strengthened against the pound and the dollar, as investors bought euro assets following the single currency's launch. Shares in Paris jumped nearly 5 per cent, and in Frankfurt 6 per cent. Shares in the biggest companies such as France Telecom, Deutsche Telekom and



Bond traders at Nomura in the City, at work with the euro for the first time yesterday

Tom Pilon

DaimlerChrysler made the biggest gains as institutional investors started to increase their holdings in the euro zone.

The pound closed at 71.08p to the euro, slightly weaker than the 70.2 pence at which it opened. The foreign exchange markets were relatively quiet as dealers tentatively tried out the results of the conversion.

Business surveys in both the UK and Germany yesterday

pointed to economic slowdown. In Britain the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply (CIPS) reported the second biggest fall in output in the survey's seven-year history.

One ray of light came in a slower fall in new orders than the previous month, hinting that the recession in manufacturing might be stabilising. But, Peter Thomson, CIPS director general, said it was not a happy start

to the year. "We have had some relief in lower interest rates, but another cut is essential."

Separate figures yesterday showed a record rise of £559m in credit card borrowing, with total new consumer credit at £1.3bn. The robust rise suggested consumer spending is still growing at a healthy pace.

Even so, Michael Saunders, UK economist at Salomon Smith Barney, predicted: "Rates will fall

to 5 per cent within the next few months." Analysts are divided over whether the next move will come this week, following the half point reduction to 6.25 per cent on 10 December.

Analysts also think a further fall in euro interest rates is on the cards if Germany shows more signs of stumbling. Yesterday's survey showed a sharp drop in manufacturing activity, with output, orders and employment all

down in December. Unemployment figures for Germany later this week could show the total climbing back above four million. If so, there will be additional pressure on Europe's central bankers to boost the economy to raise support for the euro. The ECB council is next due to meet on 21 January, but it is unlikely to cut rates again so soon.

Outlook, page 13
Rough ride for pound, page 15

Vodafone poised to bid for US rival

BY PETER TRAL LARSEN

VODAFONE IS considering entering the bidding for its US rival AirTouch in a move which could see the mobile phone group almost double in size.

AirTouch confirmed on Sunday night that it is in talks with Bell Atlantic, the largest local phone company in the US, about a takeover which would probably value the US mobile operator at \$45bn (£27bn).

However, Vodafone, which has long been seen as an ideal merger partner for AirTouch

and briefly held talks with it last year, is poised to enter the fray. The operator is interested in AirTouch's international assets, but less keen to enter the US market. In Europe, AirTouch complements Vodafone as the companies were members of rival consortia when mobile phone licences were awarded.

"It would be a marriage made in heaven," said analyst Jim McCafferty of SG Securities.

One possibility is that Vodafone and Bell Atlantic carve up AirTouch between them. Bell could combine AirTouch's West Coast business with its own mobile operations to create a national operator. Vodafone would take over AirTouch's international businesses.

Vodafone is thought to have been surprised by reports of an AirTouch/Bell deal. The acquisitive US operator is still obtaining regulatory approval for its \$53bn acquisition of GTE. Its

US rival, announced last year.

Chris Gent, Vodafone's chief executive, is currently in Australia watching the fifth Ashes Test. Vodafone sponsors the England team. "We do not comment on market rumour and speculation," a spokesman for Vodafone said last night.

Vodafone's bargaining position will be helped by its strong stock market performance over the past year, during which its shares more than doubled in value, leaving it in a strong

position to issue shares as part of any deal. Yesterday Vodafone shares jumped 73p to 1,049p, valuing the company at £32bn, as it confirmed that it had widened its lead over its rivals in the last quarter of last year.

In the final three months of 1998 it signed up 933,000 new customers in the UK. Explosive growth of its pay-as-you-go service, which added 755,000 new customers, accounted for most of the rise. Cellnet maintained its num-

Fall in house prices adds to fears of market slide

BY ANDREW VERITY

FEARS OF a downward slide in the housing market were reinforced yesterday by fresh data showing a fall in house prices for a second successive month.

The average house price fell in December from £73,231 to £73,124 - 0.1 per cent - according to the Halifax monthly house price index. This followed a November fall of 0.7 per cent.

House price inflation has reached its lowest level since 1997, with prices rising by just 4.5 per cent in the year to December. Last summer prices were rising by 7 per cent.

The fall led economists to predict a "gently simmering" market over 1999. Prices are expected to slip in the first half but rebound in the second

homeowners switching to cheaper mortgage deals.

Halifax said there was still an upward trend in house prices over the year and housing was still at historically affordable levels compared to earnings. Halifax forecasts a 4 per cent rise in prices in 1999.

Fennell Early, economist at the Council of Mortgage Lenders, said: "If you look at the overall economic environment there is caution in the market, but I wouldn't say the December price fall is a sign of a crash."

Economists are now predicting that base rates could fall to 4.5 per cent this year, allowing variable mortgage rates to fall to 3.5 per cent.

Goldsmiths fuels rumours with glum trading report

BY NIGEL COPE
Associate City Editor

GOLDSMITHS, the jewellery retailer, issued a downbeat Christmas trading statement yesterday amid speculation that the company will be taken private in the next two weeks.

Reporting sales that were "disappointing and below expectations" for the four weeks to 2 January, Jurek Piasecki, Goldsmiths' chairman and chief executive, declined to comment on a possible management buy-out. This followed a statement just before Christmas saying Goldsmiths is in preliminary talks with a potential bidder.

However, it is understood that the deal is likely to be finalised within a fortnight, led by Mr Piasecki and backed by Alchemy, the venture capital

have decided that it no longer needs the stock market and that the costs of retaining its listing are no longer worthwhile. Retailing is one of several sectors where venture capital companies are circling due to low share prices. Others include engineering and textiles.

Yesterday a study by Close Brothers Corporate Finance showed a sharp rise in the number of quoted companies going private and predicted a doubling of the number in 1999.

Last year 25 companies were taken private, of which 18 were valued at less than £50m. Close Bros said the trend would continue as smaller companies grow frustrated at UK fund managers' aversion to them.

AROUND THE WORLD'S MARKETS

LONDON

BLUE CHIPS were unimpressed by the euro's launch. Other European markets moved ahead sharply, but Footsie closed off 3.2 points at 5,879.4p. At one time it was up 34.3. BP Amoco, the new oil giant and Footsie's biggest constituent, marked its debut with a 21.5p gain to 924.5p in busy trading. Telecom shares buzzed again after good festive season mobile phone sales. Orange, up 13.7 per cent to 794.5p, led the charge with Vodafone rising 7.5 per cent to 1,049p, a peak.

Derek Pain, page 17

NEW YORK

THE DOW rose 168 points to stand within 25 points of its all-time high of 9,374.3 as investors welcomed the new year with a rally, before falling back slightly to 9,244.74, up 65, in early afternoon. Analysts attributed the movements to hopes of large flows of cash into mutual funds and subsequent profit taking. The Nasdaq Composite was up 36.82 points, or 1.68 per cent, at 2,229.51, while the broader S&P 500 index was up 13.39 points at 1,242.57.

TOKYO

THE NIKKEI tumbled over 3 per cent in a shortened first day of trading for 1999 to end at 13,415.89 amid concerns that the yen's stronger tendency against the dollar would hurt Japan's ailing economy. Traders said worries about volatility in the currency markets as the euro began to trade, and fears that the yen may firm further against the dollar battered stock market sentiment. "There are worries that the yen will rise further against the dollar," said one analyst.

HONG KONG

STOCKS CLOSED sharply lower, with the Hang Seng index ending 2.38 per cent off at 9,809.2, amid worries about the fall in Tokyo and the strength of yen. "Volatility is high and turnover low and we expect this to continue for the next few days," said Gordon Leung at Cresvale Far East. Brokers said there was little institutional action because funds did not want to increase dollar-linked positions before seeing the trend in the euro.

FRANKFURT

GERMANY'S blue-chip Xetra Dax stormed ahead as euro euphoria and telecom sector bulls took the index to a four-month high. A strong Wall Street opening buoyed the market a further percentage point in the late afternoon. The electronically traded Dax closed up 5.67 per cent at 5,290.4, while the floor Dax rose 5 per cent to 5,252.4. Deutsche Telekom soared 15.6 per cent to reach a record high of 32.43 euros in the heaviest trade among blue chips.

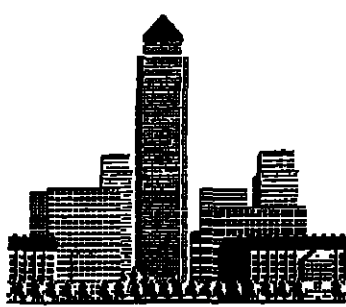
Miller Smith's new year shocker

IF Charles Miller Smith's New Year resolution was to stop giving the stock market nasty surprises, then he has already broken it. Just four days into 1999 and ICI has come up with a belter, announcing the collapse of another important element in its disposal programme and abandoning plans for a joint venture with DuPont in Pakistan.

In an effort to sugar the pill, the group has pledged to maintain the dividend for 1998 and taken the axe to a further 1,000 jobs. The £70m in savings generated by the latest job cuts will go some way towards paying the interest charges on the £4.4bn of debt ICI is still groaning under following the purchase of Unilever's specialty chemicals business.

But by any yardstick, Mr Miller Smith's grand strategy of dumping bulk chemicals and reinventing ICI as a manufacturer of scents and starches, looks to be in tatters. The chemical reaction to the latest piece of bad news from 9, Millbank was predictable. The shares were marked down 6 per cent. At this rate, the next 12 months could turn out every bit the *annus horribilis* than 1998 proved to be.

Since their peak in May last year



OUTLOOK

of 1244p, ICI shares have fallen by 60 per cent. ICI is now worth just a fifth of the value of Zeneca, the junior partner at the time of demerger six years ago. Mr Miller Smith calls ICI's start to the year "rumbustious". Others might regard it as calamitous while for the ICI chief executive himself, it begins to look perilous. ICI as a whole is now worth less than it paid for Unilever's specialty chemicals interests.

The collapse of the Tioxide sale to DuPont and NL shows that ICI cannot refinance this purchase price through disposal of the group's unwanted parts. While ICI dusts off plans for a flotation of the Tioxide business, the world is left wonder-

ing when Mr Miller Smith will deliver on his promises.

It is a moot point as to whether ICI would have been better off doing nothing, although it is hard to see how owning a collection of commodity chemicals businesses at the bottom of the cycle would now put it in a stronger position.

But that should not obscure the disaster that has overtaken Mr Miller Smith's grand strategic switch of direction. In these circumstances it is also a moot point as to whether a different management could now manage the situation any better. Mr Miller Smith must nonetheless be wondering if his position is as safe as ICI's dividend right now.

Euro destiny

HOW QUICKLY will Britain become part of Euroland? Much as we might like to think the decision is still ours to make, this may not be the end of the case. The possibility of a de facto introduction of the euro, regardless of what the British people and its politicians want, remains high.

Many big British companies take the view that sterling is already

largely an irrelevance. Some plan to account in euros (although the primary accounting currency will have to remain the pound), others propose to invoice suppliers in euros, while a few even plan to offer workers the right to receive their pay in euros.

The speed with which the British economy de facto becomes part of the eurozone, without formally joining it, will largely depend on this latter phenomenon. If the purchasing base of the country turns euro, then sterling too would soon start to disappear. Retailers would very quickly have to accept euros as well as pounds and they too, would as a consequence eventually start paying their workers in euros.

Plainly this is not going to happen overnight. Since the Revenue will continue to tax in pounds, not many companies will think it worth their while to go this route, initially at least - the administrative hassle would be too great. However, pressure from both sides of industry for payment in euros is likely to mount if the pound becomes highly volatile against the new currency. Employers would find it convenient as well as profitable to foist the exchange risk of the payroll on to their employees, while employees might be

made to feel better off and secure if paid in euros.

All this must for the time being remain in the realm of speculation. What looks rather more certain is that prices and the cost of money will quite quickly homogenise to Euroland levels. The establishment of the single currency adds a previously unattainable degree of pricing transparency across the eurozone, and as such is the final milestone on route to a fully integrated single European market place. As cross-border trade and competition picks up, prices should in theory fall towards the lowest denominator.

Big business will no doubt fight tooth and nail to make the process work the other way round - that is, to have prices rise towards the highest denominator - but either way, Britain cannot remain immune to what happens. The euro will galvanise British markets and industry as much as it will those of Euroland. In this respect, Britain will find it impossible to remain an island. The City's key position in financial markets, including for the time being, the euro markets, pushes us further still towards effective integration.

So it certainly won't be possible to avoid the effect of the euro, how-

ever much we might wish not to be a part of it, and longer term economic inevitability might force us into it in any case.

In the short term, it seems clear that there is nothing to stop a further fall in European interest rates. The new currency seems destined rapidly to establish itself as a strong and powerful one, prices are barely rising at all in many parts of Euroland, unemployment remains high and growth sluggish.

Wim Duisenberg will surely resist at this month's meeting of the ECB for fear of jumping the gun, but a further cut in rates must follow soon after. That in turn will put pressure on our own monetary policy committee for more action. Nothing is certain, but there is a fair possibility that the British economy will converge with that of Euroland much more rapidly than generally thought.

Liffe threatening

ANY CREDIBLE financial centre has to have a big futures market, and though a great deal of derivatives activity these days is customised and over the counter, a vibrant futures exchange is an absolute necessity.

Liffe used so effortlessly to occupy this position, that it is small wonder it became complacent.

First it was caught napping by Frankfurt's low cost screen dealing systems. Now it has suffered another blow - the collapse of Griffin Trading. This has highlighted quite serious regulatory failings.

Strictly speaking this is not Liffe's fault, as it is not responsible for regulating Griffin, nor is this a particularly significant collapse in the scale of things. "Only" £5.2m seems to be at risk as a result of the activities of John Ho (Ho) Park, and no more than 100 "locals", or traders, have been hit by Griffin's failure adequately to ring fence their money from Mr Park's recklessness.

Nonetheless, the mud is sticking. First Liffe is accused of charging far too much. Now it is accused of failing to safeguard its traders' money. In most rival futures exchanges, it would apparently be quite illegal to "pool" traders' interests in the way that seems to have happened at Griffin. Elsewhere, strict segregation is the order of the day, as it is in nearly all transactions involving money. For Brian Williamson, Liffe's new chairman, the Griffin debacle could hardly have come at a worse time.

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Tom Pilston

December: Unemployment for Germany later could show the total back above four million. It will be additional pressure on the economy support for the euro. The next 12 months could turn out every bit the *annus horribilis* than 1998 proved to be. Outlook, page 13. The pound, page 15.

val

ranking with 655,000 ars. 455,000 of which are paid customers. added 515,000 cus while One2One signed 100. sts welcomed the but questioned how the new customers. e. "The question is to tent the operators can these customers of the ntracts in the future." is Godsmark, an anderson Consultancy

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INKFURT

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Sir John Browne (left), BP Amoco chief executive, with Larry Fuller, co-chairman, outside Britannic House in London yesterday. John Voos

More job cuts forecast as BP Amoco surges

BP AMOCO shares surged yesterday as Britain's biggest company began trading with a warning that job losses would exceed the 6,000 initially forecast.

In heavy trading, shares in the new oil giant rose by 3 per cent to 929p on the first day of dealings, valuing the company at around £90bn.

This makes BP Amoco the biggest company by market capitalisation in the FTSE100 index of leading shares and the world's third biggest oil major behind Exxon-Mobil and Royal Dutch Shell.

BP Amoco was by far the most actively traded stock in London with more than 70 million shares changing hands as fund managers raised their weightings.

By MICHAEL HARRISON

A spokesman said that job losses would be higher than the 6,000 forecast when the merger was unveiled last August.

But he stressed that the bulk of the additional redundancies would be in the US. Of the 6,000 job losses so far announced, about 1,000 will be in the UK.

BP Amoco has pledged to reduce its cost base by 30 per cent, which will help yield savings of \$2bn a year by the end of 2000.

But analysts believe the eventual figure will be much bigger than that, perhaps as high as \$3.5bn.

The merger cleared its final hurdle last week after the US

Federal Trade Commission gave the deal the go-ahead with only minor conditions.

BP Amoco is having to dispose of 134 petrol stations in the US - less than 1 per cent of the 16,000 it owns - and nine oil product storage terminals in return for regulatory approval.

BP Amoco's chief executive will be Sir John Browne, the former chief executive of BP, while Larry Fuller of Amoco will be co-chairman alongside BP's Peter Sutherland until his retirement in 2000.

The enlarged group will start life with combined revenues of \$108bn, some 100,000 employees, reserves of 14.8 billion barrels of oil and gas and daily production of about 3 million barrels.

News Analysis: Chemical giant's £600m sale is blocked

Double blow sends ICI shares crashing

By MICHAEL HARRISON

ICI SUFFERED a double setback yesterday as US regulators blocked the £600m sale of its worldwide Tioxide business, and another 500 jobs were shed from the group's UK chemicals operations.

The collapse of the sale of ICI's Tioxide division to the US companies, DuPont and NL Industries, will further hamper the group's attempts to reduce its debts. These have ballooned following the £4.9bn purchase of Unilever's specialty chemicals division in 1997, and stood at £4.4bn last October.

Shares in ICI reacted badly to the latest bout of bad news, falling by 6 per cent to 492p and wiping £200m from the company's value. ICI shares are now 60 per cent below their peak of last May following a string of profit warnings and failed disposal attempts.

Meanwhile, the credit ratings agency Standard & Poor's, revised its outlook for ICI from stable to negative.

ICI said it had scrapped the sale of its Tioxide business in the US to DuPont and the sale of its Tioxide businesses outside North America to NL Industries after failing to get approval for the two deals from



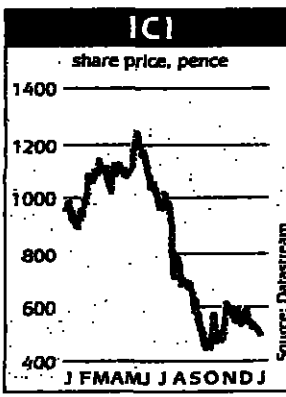
Miller Smith: strategy is "on track and delivering"

the US Federal Trade Commission (FTC) under acceptable terms.

ICI will now consider three alternatives for Tioxide - sale to another trade buyer, sale to a financial buyer, or flotation, which was the original plan for the business.

Separately, ICI said it had called off discussions with DuPont about setting up a plant to make pure terephthalic acid in Pakistan.

This is the second time the FTC has blocked an ICI disposal. In October last year ICI was forced to call off the £455m (£275m) sale of its Croscup specialty chemicals business to W R Grace after the US regulator



was painful. But he maintained that the group strategy of shedding its bulk chemicals activities and moving into less cyclical specialties chemicals, such as starches and flavourings, was paying off.

Shrugging off suggestions that his position as chief executive might now be vulnerable, Mr Miller Smith said: "The strategic direction is on course, on track and delivering."

He said that the disposal programme had been a success, with gross proceeds of £3.5bn since May 1997, more than £1bn of the sum having occurred in 1998. ICI had successfully disposed of more than 40 businesses, while only three deals had "cratered", he said.

In an attempt to ease stock market nerves, ICI said it intended to maintain the dividend for the year ended 31 December at 32p a share and forecast profits before exceptional items of at least £315m, compared with analysts' estimates ranging from £295m to £350m.

ICI will take a £120m exceptional charge to cover the redundancy programme, but it expects to generate cost savings of £70m a year with pay-back in under two years.

Outlook, this page

Liffe traders set for Griffin payout

THE LIFFE independent traders put out of business by the collapse of Griffin Trading are set to receive a payout equal to half the positions they had with the fallen futures broker within the next few days.

The Financial Services Authority, the City watchdog, said yesterday that after inspecting the Griffin books it was "confi-

dent" it could give a 50 per cent payout to all the traders hit by the scandal.

Liffe said the payouts would come in the next few days in a bid to get up to 100 "locals" - independent dealers who risk their own money - back into

business. It is understood that the losses by the dealers - who account for around 10 per cent of the exchange's locals capacity - range from £15,000 to £1m.

Griffin, the London-based unit of a well-known Chicago trading house, collapsed two weeks ago after rogue trader John Park lost \$5.25m on a German bunds futures contract.

The FSA's move came as Tullett & Tokyo, the broker used by Mr Park for his deals, said that it could take legal action against Griffin and the Korean-born trader.

Tullett & Tokyo said that it was set to lose up to DM1.2m (£430,000) as a result of Mr Park's deals.

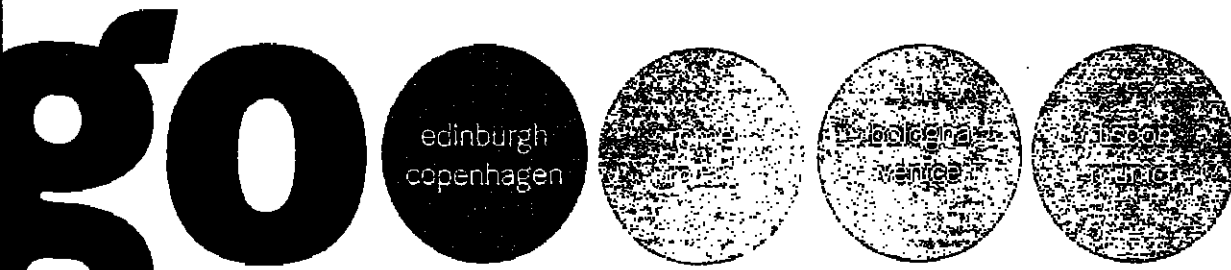
Outlook, this page

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The UK will suffer from the Government's failure to be decisive over the euro, writes Vincent Cable

Sterling is in for a bumpy ride

THE LABOUR Government has rightly emphasised the importance of financial stability. An operationally independent Bank of England and explicit fiscal stability rules are proof of good intent.

The main anomaly is a fluctuating exchange rate whose appreciation has already damaged manufacturing industry. The formation of economic and monetary union without British participation leaves sterling exposed to a period of uncertainty and instability.

The Chancellor Gordon Brown wants sterling to be stable and competitive. In practice it has been neither. Even after a decline in the DM rate from the March peak of DM3.10 to DM2.80, the effective rate — taking into account relative inflation and exchange rates of competitors — is still around 10 per cent higher than when the Government took office, according to the OECD. The price competitiveness of exports and import substitutes has declined across the board.

Because the consequent loss in orders takes time to feed through into output, investment and jobs, last year's strong pound will continue to be felt in manufacturing recession. On the Government's own figures, export volume growth will fall from 8.5 per cent in 1997 to 3.25 per cent in 1998 and 3 per cent in 1999. Most of this decline is attributable to sterling appreciation.

What of the future? The Government expects an orderly devaluation sufficient to counter recession in manufacturing but

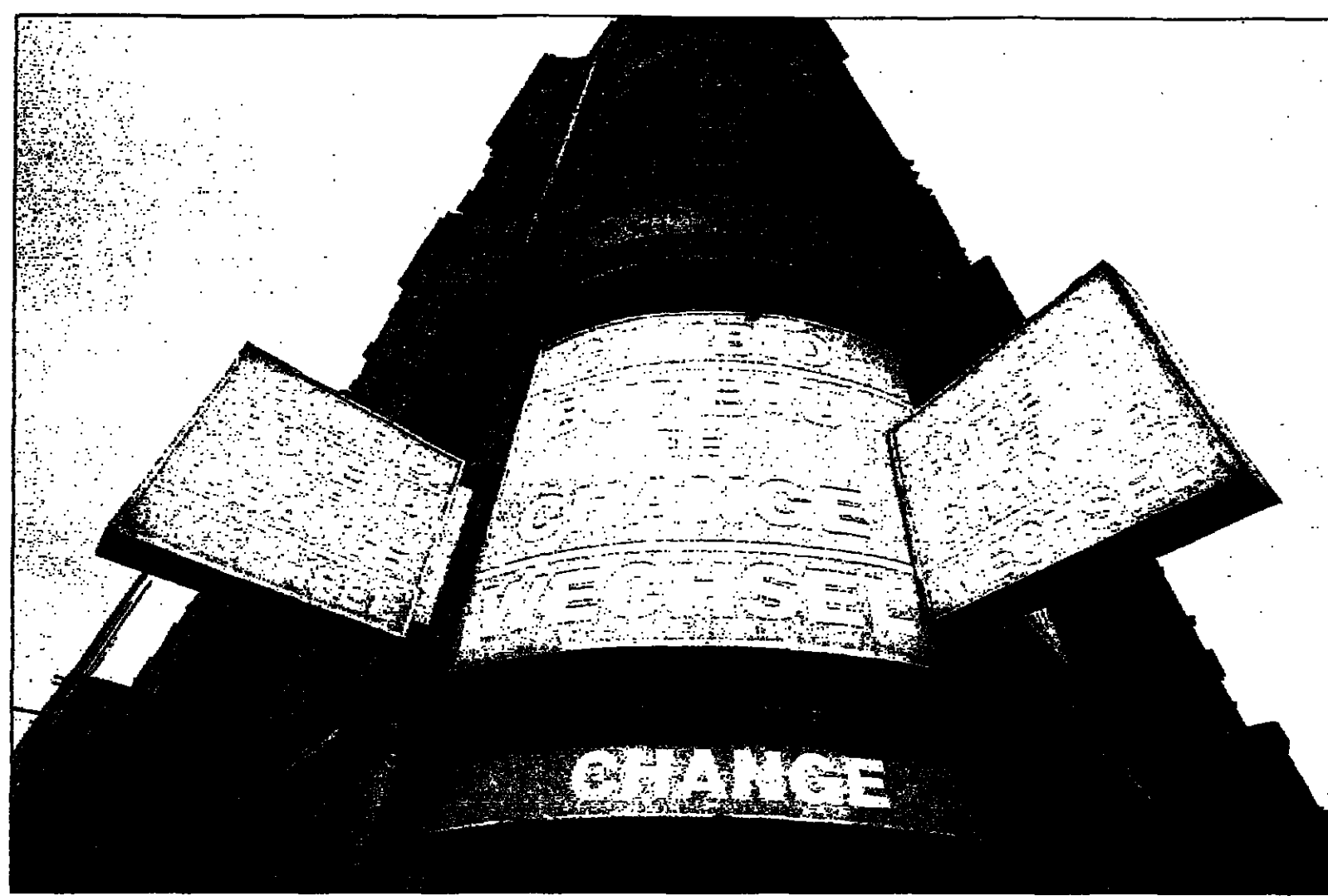
not so large as to jeopardise the inflation target. Interest rate differentials between the UK and Euro zone should close and this should pull sterling down to equalise the return on assets.

These are, however, not normal times. The launch of the euro is a seismic event in economic terms. One of the few areas of consensus among forecasters is that there will be increased volatility for currencies outside Euroland but heavily influenced by it. Volatility matters increasingly because, as the euro is more widely used in the UK for business purposes, exposure to foreign exchange risk will grow.

Continued uncertainty over British intentions is inherently destabilising. Another reason for expecting volatility is that the rest of the world is only peripherally important for Euroland economic managers. Most trade is internal.

The exchange rate will become, as it already is for the US, a residual factor. The Federal Reserve takes little account of the dollar-yen and dollar-DM rate in setting policy and the European Central Bank (ECB) will behave in the same way. The world economy will resemble a tropical mud bath in which two large hippos wallow around, crushing smaller animals, like the British, caught in the middle.

In addition to general volatility there is the risk that the euro will cause a major exchange rate shock to sterling. One possibility is that sterling could become a refuge for nervous Euroland investors if there is any loss of



The euro could cause a major exchange rate shock to sterling, possibly a large and uncontrolled devaluation

Andrew Buurman

confidence in the early years of the euro. This seems unlikely at present, but, if it happened, the cost of a 'safe haven' premium for sterling would be further damage from appreciation to exchange rate sensitive UK firms.

It is more likely that the shock would be a large uncontrolled devaluation. Two factors may make the euro exceptionally strong, relative to sterling. In one plausible scenario, there is a combination of strict monetary policy administered by the ECB and looser fiscal policy administered by left-wing governments in France, Germany and Italy.

Comparable circumstances in the US in the 1980s produced record highs for the dollar. Another influence in the same direction is the potentially huge portfolio shift in reserve holdings. Major foreign reserve holders, such as China, Japan, Singapore and Taiwan, and private funds, will demand euros as a reserve currency pushing up

the euro against other currencies including sterling.

Devaluation against the euro would have competitive advantages. But it would present two problems. Imported inflation could undermine price stability. Deep devaluation could also create a confrontation with Euroland over "unfair competition" and the risk of trade sanctions.

Sterling is due for a bumpy ride. Even if the Government tries to minimise uncertainty by signalling a clear intention to join EMU soon after the next general election, there is a potentially awkward transition. The Government has studiously avoided spelling out how it will manage the transition from a freely floating to an irrevocably fixed exchange rate regime. One suspects it doesn't really know.

It would help if the Treasury and the Bank of England set explicit monetary and fiscal convergence targets. Smaller interest and inflation differentials

would, in themselves, reduce speculative arbitrage.

The bigger issues concern the timing and rate of entry into EMU. The logic of the Government's position, at present, is that the entry rate will be determined by the timing. The rate prevailing in the markets after a successful referendum will be a likely reference point for negotiations with Euroland on an entry rate and date.

This assumes that the Government controls its present bout of suicidal infighting, gets comfortably re-elected, then, in the Nirvana of rapid and smooth decision-making promised for after the next election, sorts out the technical entry problems; and also wins a referendum.

An awful lot is being left to chance, not least the fact that the prevailing exchange rate, then, could be inappropriate, as it was when we joined the ERM.

It would surely be more sensible to address now the issue of what could be a sustainable

long-term exchange rate. There is no objectively "correct" rate. There are different views and methodologies. But some informed estimates are emerging.

Goldman Sachs in October argued for a rate of DM2.50 to 2.60. Williamson's work on a long-term equilibrium suggested a lower rate of DM 2.35 to 2.40. The Government should initiate a debate on a plausible consensus range. It could follow the model of the minimum wage where it skillfully used a political device — the Low Pay Commission — to achieve an economically sensible answer.

Whatever recommendation emerged would influence market expectations and also help to persuade Euroland governments that the proposed British entry rate has a basis in economic fundamentals, not opportunism or pure chance.

If the logic of entry starts with an appropriate exchange rate, a window of opportunity may well open before the next general

election. The euro-starting rate will at some point approach the desired level. If overall convergence was close, this would be the time to lock sterling into a stable exchange rate regime. There would be the additional merit of pre-empting the Maastricht Treaty requirement that Britain should demonstrate a period of exchange rate stability before EMU entry.

The main awkwardness is political. The Prime Minister has ruled out EMU entry before the next election. The Chancellor has ruled out joining a re-constituted ERM as an intermediate step. One of them, almost certainly the Chancellor, will have to eat his words. But that is a small price to pay for a stable and competitive exchange rate and a smoother trajectory to EMU entry.

Vincent Cable is the Liberal Democrat finance spokesman and a member of the Treasury Select Committee

Rebels raise pressure on Tay Homes

BY FRANCESCO GUERRERA

PRESSURE WAS mounting on Tay Homes last night after a leading investor urged the management to take speedy action to revive the house-builder's flagging share price and a rebel shareholder called a meeting to oust the board.

Foreign & Colonial, Tay's fourth-largest investor with a 7 per cent stake, said it had issued an ultimatum to the Leeds-based company after losing patience with the poor performance of its stock.

F&C's move came as Sunley Group, the small property company masterminding a shareholder revolt, confirmed that it had called an emergency meeting to oust the board.

Tay shares have fallen from 142.5p in March to 107.5p yesterday as the company was hit hard by the economic slowdown in the North. David Manning, F&C's head of UK equities, said the current board, led by chief executive John Swanson, had six months to turn round the company's fortunes. "We have put Tay under warning to produce some results. We want to see reasonably swift action in the first half of the year," he said.

However, Mr Manning said the fund manager would not support Sunley's call to replace Mr Swanson, chairman Norman Stubbs and two other directors with Sunley's nominees. The privately owned group has nominated Peter Hedges, a former executive with construction group Taylor Woodrow, as chairman and Sunley's chief executive, Richard Tice, as chief executive. Mr Manning said Sunley's attempt to win four seats on the board on the back of its 10 per cent holding was an attempt to take over the company without paying a premium.

Mr Tice said Phillips & Drew, Tay's second-largest shareholder with a 15 per cent stake, would vote in favour of Sunley's proposals at the meeting to be held in February. He said the new board would slash costs and ready the company — which last year completed 1,500 houses, mainly in northern England — for merger with a rival.

Mr Swanson said the Tay board was pursuing a similar strategy by winding down its operations in the North-west to focus on the rest of the country. He added that he was confident that the current management would win the votes of the majority of shareholders at the meeting.

IN BRIEF

'Rogue' directors rise by one-third
THE NUMBER of "rogue" directors disqualified as unfit to run a public company rose by more than a third in the third quarter of last year, the Government announced yesterday.

Kim Howells, Minister for Competition and Consumer Affairs at the Department of Trade and Industry, issued the figures as he hailed the success of a "Defiant Directors Hotline" set up by the DTI a year ago to tackle rogue directors and bankrupts who continue to operate in the face of court bans. The 1,200 calls received by the Insolvency Service have pushed the number of allegations of law breaking up by 40 per cent over the previous year. The service is considering prosecutions in over 100 cases. The Hotline number is 0845 601 3546.

Red Star sold
RED STAR Parcels, the loss-making division of British Rail that was sold for £1 three years ago, has been bought by Lynx Express.

The terms of the transaction were not revealed but the deal is likely to have made a small fortune for the management, led by John Holmes, who were part of a consortium that bought Red Star in March 1995. The other investors were BZW and TSB. Red Star was losing about £10m a year when it was sold but is now understood to be breaking even. The deal that will make Lynx the UK's largest independent parcels group with 4,000 vehicles, 3,000 employees and annual sales of £170m.

Bernard shake-up
BERNARD MATTHEWS, the food supplier, yesterday announced an internal shake-up designed to simplify its structure. The company is transferring its food operation to a wholly-owned subsidiary, Bernard Matthews Foods. The company's intellectual property rights and financing operations will stay within the quoted parent company, Bernard Matthews plc.

County Hotels is £120m target for Regal

BY NIGEL COPE

REGAL HOTELS, the three-star hotel group that abandoned plans to go private late last year, yesterday confirmed that it is in talks to buy privately controlled County Hotels for about £120m.

County Hotels is one of Britain's largest privately held hotel chains, with a portfolio

that includes 25 properties including Burnham Beeches, the occasional residence of the England football team. Most of the hotels are in the three-star category and fit well geographically with Regal's chain. County Hotels, a £91m man-

agement buyout from Queens Moat Houses in 1997, is controlled by a venture capital consortium led by Duke Street Capital, the private equity firm which had reportedly hoped to float the business last year.

Regal, based in Newbury, Berkshire, has been upgrading its portfolio of 91 hotels. It has

a three-year programme to spend £80m refurbishing its existing chain under the Corus brand name. It bought the White Hart chain from Forte in 1996 and Country Clubs the following year.

Also in 1997 it sold 20 per cent of its equity to Regent Corporation for £40m, and used part

of the cash to fund the purchase of a 49 per cent stake in the Plaza Hotel near London's Hyde Park, where it has the management contract. The rest was spent on refurbishment. It also sold 14 hotels last year.

Regal said yesterday that any acquisition would be made through a joint venture com-

pany and would not require the raising of additional funds.

Regal says the three-star sector accounts for two-thirds of the market but suffers from a lack of branding. It focuses on hotels with around 60 rooms aimed at business travellers.

Regal shares closed unchanged at 32p.

Three UK companies snap up German firms

BY CLIFFORD GERMAN

THREE SEPARATE UK companies announced the acquisition of family businesses in Germany yesterday.

The deals are a result of the decision by Oskar Lafontaine, the German finance minister, to withdraw the concession allowing family businesses to pay only half the 50 per cent gains tax on disposals up to DM30m with effect from the end of 1998.

In all three cases existing management will stay on with the new owners.

Berisford International, the former commodities business that was reborn as a supplier of equipment to the food industry and owner of the Magnet kitchens brand, has bought Convothorn Elektrogerate, a privately-owned business making commercial ovens.

The price is dependent on



Oskar Lafontaine: changed rules on Capital Gains Tax

1998 profits but is expected to be around £13m in cash. The business manufactures ovens for supermarkets to meet the growing demand for hot, prepared meals.

Polypipe, a specialist manufacturer of plastic products, is paying £9m in cash for Pagette,

which manufactures plastic toilet seats and WC cisterns. Pagette will become part of Polypipe's bathroom and kitchen products division.

Lavendon Group, which hires out powered ladders and gantries, is paying £6.1m in cash for Albert Fuerg, a family-owned firm in the same line of business.

The price includes £2.6m of debt and will be earnings enhancing in 1999 before amortisation of goodwill. David Shipman, Lavendon's managing director, said yesterday. The acquisition will take Lavendon into southern Germany and extend its business in the east.

Lavendon also reported a 60 per cent jump in turnover to £14.65m and a 53 per cent rise in profits to £2.36m in the six months to the end of June 1998. The shares, which halved in the shake-out last summer, recovered 13.5p to 285p yesterday.

Soros firm buys £12m stake in Greycoat

BY FRANCESCO GUERRERA

GEORGE SOROS, the speculator, yesterday moved closer to buying a large part of the City of London after one of his companies spent £12m on a stake in the developer Greycoat.

Delancey Estates, a property group controlled by Mr Soros's Quantum Realty Interfund, became Greycoat's second-largest shareholder after buying a 7.1 per cent stake in an end-of-year swoop.

City analysts said the purchase could herald a bid for Greycoat, whose shares have been languishing well below its 220p net asset value. The shares closed up 5p at 177p.

Greycoat is a leading player in the Square Mile office market, with several high-profile developments. The company is part of the consortium that bought the International Financial Centre (formerly NatWest Tower) for £226m in July.

Delancey, where John Ritblat, the chairman of British Land, and his son James have a 30 per cent stake, is understood to have bought over 7 million shares at 168p per share from Bryan Myerson and Julian Treger. Their UK Active Value Fund has been trying to offload its holding after falling to force a merger between Greycoat and Moorfield Estates.

Mr Soros's move comes only weeks after Greycoat was reported to have received a tentative approach from Wales City

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SPORT

Rugby Union: Ulster's European Cup semi-final against Stade Francais leads the way in a country-wide renaissance

Irish eyes have reason to smile



Ireland's back row discovery, Andy Ward (centre), prepares the Ulster players at Ravenhill yesterday for a big effort in Saturday's European Cup match against Stade Francais

Stephen Davison/Pacemaker

IT IS, as usual, a filthy Friday night in Belfast and the rain is lashing horizontally across Ravenhill. Some 12,000 supporters are sardined into the very stadium where Ireland completed their one and only Five Nations' Grand Slam more than half a century ago and, much as their forefathers did on that famous day in 1948, they are yelling and screaming like banshees. The ball is permanently in the air, the fires are burning in the souls of 15 granite-hard Ulstermen. God is in his heaven and Toulouse, those swaggering rugby aristocrats from south-west France, are on their way out of the European Cup.

"That," smiles Harry Williams, the Ulster coach, as the dust settles on a wonderfully unexpected 15-13 triumph, "must be the best result in our history." Maybe, maybe not; Ulster have had lots of best results in their history. They beat Andrew Slack's 1984 Wallabies, one of the two or three finest sides ever to tour these islands, and they twice fought the All Blacks to a standstill in thunderous drawn matches. They also won nine successive inter-provincial titles from 1985 to 1993, when they could boast Trevor Ringland and Keith Crossan on the wings, David Irwin in the centre, Willie Anderson in the boilerhouse and Phil Matthews in the back row.

This much, though, can be set



CHRIS HEWETT

down in reinforced concrete: victory on Saturday over Stade Francais, the most lavishly gifted club side in the world, would be an achievement worthy of its own special place in the Ravenhill memory bank. It would be spectacular enough as an end in itself: European Cup semi-finals are not exactly common currency among the Irish provinces and besides, the visiting Frenchmen really are that good, armed as they are with a team of internationals welded together by Max Guazzini's countless millions. But this occasion delves far deeper and runs much wider as a symbol of Ireland's rugby renaissance.

From Belfast to Cork via Galway and Dublin, the game is on a mighty roll; virtually an entire Test team, from Simon Mason at full-back to Eric Miller at No 8, have abandoned

lucrative careers in the English Premiership and returned home, thereby enabling the three European Cup provinces - Ulster, Munster and Leinster - to prevail over quality French opposition during the pool phase of the current European tournament. As a result, the crowds are well up on last year and the national team is feeling better about itself and its chances of making a decent fist of this autumn's World Cup adventure.

"I'll take as much European rugby as I can get," said Warren Gatland, the Ireland coach, this week. "It's all about demystifying the game at the highest level, when Irish provincial players face the best French teams with such regularity and start beating them, they begin to realise their opponents are not

such supermen after all. Why put them on a pedestal? Two or three years ago, Ulster would not have beaten Toulouse in a European Cup quarter-final; they would have caved in as the game moved into its later stages. This time, though, I genuinely see the match as a 50-50 game.

"The fact that we have so many of our leading players training together on a professional basis here in Ireland has led to a big improvement in fitness levels. The gap between what has been happening in England and France and the things happening here is closing very quickly and judging by the way things are shaping up, I think we're looking at a very competitive Five Nations' championship this season."

By luring seven players back from the Allied Dunbar Premiership,

Ulster proved themselves the most persuasive of the provinces. Three of those recruits - Mason, Jonathan Bell and the former London Irish stand-off, David Humphreys - have featured throughout the European Cup campaign while a fourth, the hooker Allen Clarke, has missed only one match. With 106 points already in his kitbag, Mason, once of Richmond, is the tournament's leading scorer. Humphreys, meanwhile, dropped two goals to help beat Toulouse on that rainswept night a little over three weeks ago and has shouldered the captaincy burden in the prolonged absence of Mark McCall.

Their presence, along with that of Gatland's remarkable back row discovery, Andy Ward, has been the driving force behind Ulster's welcome

re-emergence as a representative side of serious stature. Traditionally the strongest of the four Irish provinces, the All Whites fell on hard times after winning their last domestic title almost six years ago. Their early forays into Europe bordered on the embarrassing - two victories in 12 matches over three years - and when Tony Russ, such a successful coach with Saracens and Leicester, jumped ship in 1997 after deciding that life with lowly Waterloos offered the brighter future, the northerners were down on their uppers.

"They were bad times," acknowledges Michael Reid, the energetic and resourceful chief executive at Ravenhill who has presided over the dramatic about-turn. "We needed to make something happen, so we went after big names across the water. I'm glad to say we got it right. Humphreys and the rest have been a revelation; I'd go so far as to say that they brought professionalism with them across the Irish Sea."

"I moved here 15 months ago and it seemed to me that even though the existing squad considered themselves professionals, they were going through the motions. Playing at it, almost. There is no doubt in my mind that the players we signed from the big English clubs have thrown a completely different light on the meaning of professionalism; the Al-

lied Dunbar is a tough, high quality competition and those involved know what it is to make the necessary sacrifices and put in the requisite amount of effort. The Bells and Clarkes of this world are serious operators and they've brought a new dimension to our rugby."

Talking of new dimensions, Reid, a former coach with the Irish Fourth Division club Collegians, has drawn on his banking background to turn things round commercially. "Our decision to start playing big matches on a Friday night rather than a Saturday afternoon has been justified by a wave of public support; we're averaging crowds of 8,500 this season, as opposed to a couple of thousand last year. The floodlighting here is magnificent, the atmosphere is very special and the whole package has earned us an awful lot of converts."

"In many ways, it's a shame Stade Francais wouldn't play this one on Friday night. Still, we don't need to perform under lights to give the French something to think about. Our whole attitude is different somehow. Twelve months ago we'd have happily settled for a European Cup quarter-final and not even dared ask for anything more. We wouldn't have considered ourselves worthy. Right now, though, we'll have a go at anyone. A nice final at Lansdowne Road? That would be grand, wouldn't it?"

Ulster the real breeding ground

THE ROMANTICS love to blarney on about the pride and passion of Munster, but the real power in Irish provincial rugby is located well to the north of Cork and Limerick. Think of Ulster and you think of Jackie Kyle, Mike Gibson, Willie John McBride and 24 All-Ireland provincial titles, either shared or won outright, since the competition was first introduced in 1946. When you take into account a barren decade

between 1957 and 1966, the sheer weight of domestic achievement is all the more remarkable.

Rugby first caught on in Ulster in 1868 as a winter exercise for members of the North of Ireland Cricket Club; within a year, Queen's University, Belfast, was boasting its own side. Ulster were not a founding province of the Irish Rugby Union in 1874 but by 1879 they were part and parcel of the scene.

Ulster's experience in the first three Heineken Cups was unhappy: they lost both pool games in the 1995-96 competition, fared little better the following year, and were even more dismal last season, when Wasps put almost 100 points past them in two outings. This season, though, they have been magnificent, with two victories over Toulouse, the 1996 champions, in the space of seven weeks.



Andrew Isherwood: Part of Monie's plans

Dave Rowcliffe

Isherwood makes early impact

THE COACHING record of John Monie is such that virtually every year he pulls a young unknown out of the hat to play a big part in his team. If you were laying odds on who the mystery man might be this coming season, the name of Andrew Isherwood would be well to the fore. Blink and you would have missed his first-team contribution last season, with three substitute appearances his sum total. Yet Lee Gilmour had made even less of a mark than that this time last year and went on to play in every game of Wigan's successful 1998 rugby league campaign. It is a precedent that appeals to the 19-year-old Isherwood. "It shows that you will get a chance," he says. "And what I'd like to achieve is a permanent first-team place."

That might not be the wild ambition it sounds. With Gilmour

New faces for 1999: A second row of real rugby talent is the latest addition to Wigan's front line. By Dave Hadfield

earmarked to play in the centres this season and Denis Betts unlikely to be fit for the early rounds, the opportunity could be there for a newcomer in the second row.

In his brief tastes of the action against Huddersfield, Hull and Warrington, Isherwood showed enough to suggest that he will be able to cope.

"I didn't find it as daunting as I thought I would," he says. "But when you've got players like Andy Farrell in the changing-rooms with you it helps a lot. Denis Betts and Terry O'Connor have been really helpful as well."

Like Betts, Isherwood was a relative latecomer to the game, not

playing until he was 12 and then being selected for the Leigh Town team after his first match.

Other clubs were soon tracking him, but there was never much doubt that he would be joining Wigan, where he has gradually and carefully been groomed for bigger things. He stood out in both the Academy and Alliance sides last season, coming under the influence of another former second-row forward of some note.

"I owe a lot to Andy Goodway," he acknowledges. "I learnt a lot from him last season that I needed to know before I could go any further."

When he started to train with the

first-team squad midway through last season, Isherwood decided that his college course in psychology would have to be shelved, although one of the many things that Wigan like about him is that he is mature beyond his years.

"I couldn't carry on at college and give rugby 100 per cent," he says. "There will be time for that later."

Wigan point to him having done the right thing in clearing the decks by planning to take Isherwood to the first-team training camp in Lanzarote this month - the most solid indication yet that he figures prominently in Monie's plans. He has already shown that he is outstanding at his age level, playing for the

Great Britain Academy side and being named as man of the match in a hard-earned victory across the Channel.

Now it is time to join the big boys and there are plenty at Wigan who believe that he will make a smooth transition.

The club's former chief executive, Phil Clarke - yet another distinguished back-row forward into whose orbit he has fallen - tells a story about rebuking Isherwood when he found him reading a down-market tabloid.

As an intelligent young man, he told him, he should be scanning something more like *The Independent*. "But I need to understand the thought processes of my teammates," Isherwood retorted. A bright answer from a bright lad with a bright future.

Modern burdens ensure less-than-happy hookers

ONE OF my rugby maxims is that it is possible to look 50 per cent better than you really are as an open-side flanker if you are bald, blond or red-headed, or wear a scrum-cap. Even the most hardened inhabitant of the press box will say: "Look at that No 7. He's everywhere. Should be in line for a cap before long." This is one maxim which has survived the onset of professionalism and changes in the laws.

A more recent maxim of mine is: the worst position on the field is hooker. No wonder they shave their heads and trot around the pitch as if they expect to be arrested at any minute, as, indeed, some of them – no names, no wrists – undoubtedly should be. Their burdens are legion, their responsibilities multifarious. They are expected to secure the ball on their own put-in. True, they



ALAN WATKINS

always were. This aspect of their duties has become lighter with the passage of the years, as referees now tolerate flagrantly crooked feeds which, if they are spotted at all, are penalised with an indirect penalty. More, they are expected to cavort

around the field like supernumerary flankers, turning up here, there and everywhere. Several of them are very good at this aspect of their tasks. Colin Deans, the former Scotland hooker, was as fast as a back. Richard Cockerill, the current occupant for England, would not claim to be a Deans, of whom he may well never have heard. But he is no slouch either.

Above all, hookers are expected not only to throw in straight at the lineout but to direct their throw so that their own side secure possession. If a hooker fails to do this he is liable either to receive the sympathy of the commentators as a player who is having a bad day or to be denounced by them as someone who is not up to the job.

The latter fate befell Phil Kearns, the Australian hooker – who, after

Sean Fitzpatrick of New Zealand, used to be considered the best practitioner in the world. The occasion was the recent England v Australia match at Twickenham. Poor Kearns kept missing the target, wiping the ball and becoming perceptibly more worried by the minute. At half-time he was substituted.

It was evident that the ball was not landing where Kearns wanted it to land. However, it is a big jump from this to lay down that the hooker must always throw in such a way as to secure possession from the lineout. For this is to admit that the lineout has become a formality – or a farce.

A scrum, even with the rarity of a straight put-in, still gives the advantage to the side putting in. It does so because of the relative

positions of the feet of the hookers and the props. A lineout, even with lifting allowed, should provide no comparable advantage to the side throwing in.

In the nature of things there must, of course, be some advantage, because the hooker, his scrum-half and several forwards know – or ought to know – the point which he is aiming to reach. It does not follow from this that the hooker should guarantee possession. If he can, there is something wrong with the supervision of the lineout by the referee. I believe there are two evils at present.

One is that players dart about, changing places as if they were engaged in some childish game, while the hooker pretends to make a throw. The referees should put a stop to musical chairs and dummy

throws. The forwards (or the number of forwards chosen) should be required to stand in the order in which they propose to contest the lineout. The hooker should then have to throw in without delay and with no dummied play – any more than either play would be allowed in a scrum-half putting into the scrum.

The second evil is more controversial. Indeed, it is popularly regarded as a shining virtue. I refer to the gap between the players. If there is one spectacle calculated to arouse the enthusiasm of dear old Bill McLaren, it is that of a referee parading up and down between the two lines of forwards like a sergeant-major, roughly pushing apart citizens about three times his size. And yet this much-prized gap is an invitation to violent collision. It also encour-

ages the musical chairs. It should be diminished drastically or even eliminated altogether.

And why, in any case, should the hooker be responsible for throwing in? Until the late 1960s the wings did the job. Very often it was the only contact with the ball which they enjoyed throughout the game.

The French persisted with this system for longer than anyone else. Then Jacques Fouroux, the French coach and former scrum-half, handed the task to the scrum-half.

Coaches should once again show more imagination about who does the throwing in. Referees should be more vigilant unless they want the lineout to go the same way as the scrum as a source of uncontested possession. But perhaps this is precisely what the organisers of modern rugby have wanted all along.

Officials cause play-off mayhem

AMERICAN FOOTBALL
BY NICK HALLING

IT IS not only managers and players from the Premiership who are unhappy about refereeing standards. Their counterparts across the Atlantic have been seething all year about a series of blown calls and debatable decisions, and the clamour for the return of the instant replay system will doubtless intensify after two of the weekend's four play-off games were effectively determined by officiating errors.

The San Francisco 49ers prevailed 30-27 over the Green Bay Packers in a game of genuine drama that was overshadowed by a bad call on the 49ers' final drive. Trailing by three points, the Packers took the lead when Brett Favre threw a 10-yard touchdown to Antonio Freeman with less than two minutes left.

Needing a touchdown to win, San Francisco's hopes looked to be dashed when the receiver, Jerry Rice, fumbled. The officials ruled that Rice was down before the ball came loose, although replays showed that he had lost the ball prior to contact with the ground.

It proved to be a game-changing decision, because with just three seconds remaining, Steve Young threw a 25-yard touchdown to the receiver Terrell Owens, and the 49ers were through to a meeting with the Atlanta Falcons in the most dramatic of circumstances.

There was nothing but bitterness in the visitors' locker-room afterwards. Players who criticise officials are fined, but Green Bay's general manager, Ron Wolf, allowed his frustration to boil over. "It's tough to lose no matter how you do it, but when you make a play, and it's not awarded to you, something's wrong with the whole system," he said. "It is something that has to be addressed."

Frustration, too, for the Buffalo Bills, who were penalised nine times for 98 yards in their 24-17 reverse at the Miami Dolphins. At least four of the penalties were highly questionable, but the worst came when the Bills, trailing by 10 points, had a touchdown called back, the officials ruling that the receiver Andre Reed had come up short of the end zone.

Again, replays suggested that Reed had scored, and the receiver reacted with such anger that he was ejected from the game. Instead, the Bills had to settle for a field goal, and



San Francisco receiver Terrell Owens scores a touchdown with three seconds remaining to shatter Green Bay's hopes in a controversial finale

Reuters

found themselves with too much to do with time running out. The Dolphins now meet the Denver Broncos.

"I don't know if they have other jobs or what, but they need to devote full-time to what they do," Reed fumed. "They need to go back to school because some of the calls they made were the worst in the last 20 years."

The NFL abandoned the use of

instant replay three years ago, but in a season marred by poor officiating, its return seems inevitable.

No such controversy in the weekend's other two play-off games. The long-suffering Arizona Cardinals won their first post-season contest since 1947 by upsetting the Dallas Cowboys 20-7. The underdogs from Arizona harried the Dallas quarterback, Troy Aikman, sacking him

four times and forcing him to throw three interceptions. In contrast, the Cards' quarterback, Jake Plummer, threw scoring passes to Adrian Murrell and Larry Centers to cause the biggest upset of the season. Arizona will visit the Minnesota Vikings in the next round.

The injury-plagued New England Patriots were unable to overcome the absence of their

quarterback, Drew Bledsoe, a brave but ultimately futile rear-guard action resulting in a 25-10 reverse at the hands of the Jacksonville Jaguars.

The Jaguars had injury problems of their own. Their quarterback, Mark Brunell, returned after missing five weeks with an ankle sprain, but looked less than impressive in completing just 14 of his 34 passes. Fortunately for Jacksonville, the

running back Fred Taylor was at his best, rushing for 163 yards and scoring the game's opening touchdown on a 13-yard run. Their reward is a daunting trip to the New York Jets next week.

NFL PLAY-OFFS: Miami 24, Buffalo 17, Arizona 20, Dallas 10, Jacksonville 25, New England 10, San Francisco 30, Green Bay 27. DIVISIONAL GAMES SCHEDULE (Saturday): NFC: San Francisco at Atlanta, AFC: Miami at Denver (Sunday); AFC: Jacksonville at NY Jets, NFC: Arizona at Minnesota.

Bologna cash in on NBA lock-out

BASKETBALL
BY JEFF TAYLOR

ENGLAND'S Michael Olowokandi will begin his professional career in Italy with Kinder Bologna instead of the United States because of the ongoing labour dispute which is threatening to force the cancellation of the National Basketball Association (NBA) season.

Olowokandi, born in Nigeria but who moved to England at a young age, was the No 1 pick in last summer's NBA draft and was set to sign a multi-million pound contract with the Los Angeles Clippers before NBA bosses shut down the league to try to renegotiate the money-sharing agreement with players.

The dispute, known as the NBA lock-out, has already forced the

cancellation of half of this year's games. The campaign faces a complete collapse this week with owners and players admitting they are at a dead end in negotiations.

"If the NBA season is resumed, he'll be able to return and play. If the season is cancelled, he'll stay in Italy," said Billy Duffy, Olowokandi's agent. Duffy, who also fixed a three-year deal for the England reserve centre, Andy Betts, with another Italian side, Teamsystem Bologna, added: "It'll be his option to stay with Kinder for the rest of the season."

Olowokandi will reportedly earn \$250,000 up to 15 February and if he finishes the season with the Italians he will receive another \$1.3m.

Olowokandi, despite his size and athleticism, failed to draw any interest in England several years ago. He had a trial with the Budweiser League's Thames Valley Tigers but was not offered a contract and, after randomly choosing Pacific University in the United States, was invited to the team.

The 7ft 1in shot-blocking centre, who is still wanted by the England coach, Laszlo Nemeth, for the national team, developed into one of the most dominating big men at college level.

If he joins Kinder Bologna, the reigning European and Italian League champions, his contract stipulates he can return to America if the NBA lock-out ends, but no later than 15 February.

"We're betting the NBA season won't start," a Kinder team spokesman, Marco Angrisani, said. "We have reached a tentative agreement with Olowokandi's agent and now we're just waiting for him to get here."

Olowokandi could make his debut in a Euro League second-round game on Thursday at PAOK Salonica in Greece. Yesterday was the deadline for registering players for Euro League play.

Storm increase their lead at top

ICE HOCKEY

MANCHESTER STORM moved five points clear at the top of the Sekonda Superleague after nearest rivals Cardiff Devils crashed to their third successive defeat on Sunday night.

Storm comfortably beat Bracknell Bees 4-1 at the Manchester Arena with the visitors again forced to play a 16-year-old netminder, Craig Astle, because of injuries to Mark Bernard and Brian Greer.

Astle produced a superb performance in keeping Manchester down to four goals, with a Jeff Tomlinson brace either side of a strike from Bracknell's Shayne McCosh putting Storm 2-1 ahead by the end of the second period. Manchester wrapped up the points with third-period goals from Jeff Jablonski and Stefan Keltola.

Cardiff, meanwhile, lost 6-3 to an injury and flu-hit Sheffield side at the Sheffield Arena. The home side had nine players who were told by doctors they should not be playing but none the less coasted to victory with goals from Rob Wilson, Derek Laxdale, Tony Hand, Ed Courtenay, Ken Priestley and Hakan Falkenball.

Ayr Scottish Eagles came from 2-0 down after Jason Campeau and Mike Harding had put London Knights in front at the Centrum.

The Eagles rattled home six goals without reply as a double from Mark Wolf came either side of strikes

from David St Pierre, John Parco, and a brace from Karly Biette.

Nottingham Panthers remain eight points adrift of the leaders after beating Newcastle Riverkings at the Telewest Arena.

After a scoreless first period Newcastle took a two-goal lead through Dale Jago and Mike Bodnarchuk. Nottingham, however, were level by the end of the second period courtesy of goals from Randall Weber and Jamie Leach, before Jarret Zukowsky sealed victory for the Panthers. It was the second comeback in as many nights for the Panthers, who on Saturday had to score twice in the closing 72 seconds to see off the flu-ridden Sheffield Steelers.

Despite their defeat at Ayr, London Knights rose off the bottom of the table on Saturday after beating Bracknell Bees 9-3 at Amen Corner for their biggest win of the season.

The game was over inside half an hour as Corey Lyons and Kelly Glowa had both netted twice. P C Drouin pulled one back for the Bees, but two goals for Debb Carpenter, a third for Glowa and one from Mike Harding followed as Knights ran riot.

Colin Ward and Dennis Burke added a touch of respectability to Bracknell's goals tally, before Regan Stocco completed the rout.

Setback as World Nines dumped

RUGBY LEAGUE

BY DAVE HADFIELD

THE GAME's international development has suffered a significant blow with the cancellation of the World Nines in Johannesburg less than five weeks before the tournament was due to take place.

The 10-team event has been scrapped because of a lack of television coverage in Britain and Australia, according to the South African Rugby League. "Sky could not find a spot for it at short notice and that had an impact on sponsors," said its chairman, Barry Haslam.

The tournament was only awarded to South Africa last month after an offer from Louis Luyt, the former president of the South African Rugby Football Union, to underwrite it. Luyt owns Ellis Park and is eager to stage events there; particularly ones, it seems, that cut across his former Saru allies.

"We are very disappointed that the World Nines will not be taking place, but we understand the reasons," said the Rugby League's chief executive, Neil Tunnicliffe. "It was always going to be difficult to organise the tournament in such a short time frame."

Sky Television said yesterday that the shortage of time had indeed been the problem. "We were not informed about the tournament until 21 December and that didn't give time to schedule the event," a spokesman said. "At no stage was Sky committed to covering it."

The next meeting of the international federation and the draw for the 2000 World Cup, both earmarked for the same week in Johannesburg, will now be re-arranged.

The 2000 and 2001 Nines tournaments, also awarded to South Africa, are still scheduled to take place there, as is the one-off match between Great Britain and New Zealand in November, but the credibility of the event has suffered greatly.

Ironically, the news of the cancellation came on the day that the Great Britain coach, Andy Goodway, named a 14-man squad for the tournament. Nobody will be more disappointed at it being scrapped than two teenagers, with only a brief taste of first-team rugby behind them, who had been included in the party.

Stuart Fielden, a 19-year-old prop, made his mark in Bradford's injury-hit pack last season, while Leeds' Kevin Sinfield is even more of an emerging talent. The 18-year-old loose forward or stand-off only figured briefly in the first team last year, but impressed in the Christmas friendlies against Halifax and Castleford. Goodway had included both players with the World Cup in Britain in 2000 in mind, planning to give them international experience now in order to accelerate their development.

One of Britain's greatest players of the modern era, Garry Schofield, has agreed to make a playing comeback with struggling Doncaster. Schofield was sacked as player-coach at Huddersfield last season and has been playing rugby union at Aberavon.

The one stumbling block in the way of his return to league at the age of 33 is that Doncaster have to show that they are financially viable before being confirmed in membership of the First Division for the coming season.

The former Great Britain second-rower, Sonny Nickle, has rejoined St Helens, the club that sacrificed him in order to sign Paul Newlove three years ago. Nickle, now 29, was one of three players who moved to Bradford in exchange for Newlove in November 1995. He has been released as a free agent with one year of his contract to run, so joins Ellery Hanley's squad for next season without costing a fee.

'Great white hope' Quarry dies aged 53

BOXING
BY KIERAN DALEY

THE FORMER heavyweight boxer Jerry Quarry, who twice fought Muhammad Ali and lost two title bouts, died on Sunday at the age of 53 after a long descent into dementia brought on by repeated blows to the head, according to his niece.

Quarry died at Twin Cities Hospital in Tempe, Arizona, where he had been brought on by dementia pugilistica, which is brain damage caused by blows to the head.

The progressive malady, similar

to Alzheimer's disease, left Quarry virtually helpless and in the care of his family. "He died of complications to pneumonia – brought on by dementia," Coolbaugh said from the hospital.

She added that Quarry had suffered for 14 years from dementia that had greatly worsened in the past three years. Almost to the end, she said, he was able to recognise his family and even talk about his fights, and was surrounded by nieces and nephews, sons and daughter, brothers and sisters and his mother.

Quarry, a Los Angeles native who lived with relatives in Paso Robles, fought 66 times, winning 53 of them and 53 by knockout and was cynically promoted as a "great white hope."

He won his first 20 bouts before losing a 10-round decision to Eddie Machen in 1966. Quarry bounced back to win his next 10 fights, twice defeating the former champion Floyd Patterson in 1967.

After Ali was stripped of the

World Boxing Association crown, Quarry lost a disputed 15-round title bout to Jimmy Ellis on 27 April 1968. Fourteen months later, he had another opportunity to win the belt, but was knocked out by Joe Frazier in the seventh round in New York.

On 26 October, 1970, Quarry was Ali's first opponent after his three-and-a-half-year exile and proved easy pickings. Ali knocked him out in the third round on his road back to the championship and sent him to the canvas again in the seventh round on 27 June, 1972.

Obituary: Review, page 6

Humphreys fitness boost for Ulster

DAVID HUMPHREYS, the Irish international stand-off whose inspirational form has propelled Ulster into the semi-finals of the European Cup, has declared himself fit to face the tournament favourites, Stade Français, at Ravenhill on Saturday.

Humphreys has not played since damaging his left shoulder in the closing seconds of the quarter-final victory over Toulouse last month, but he had cause for celebration yesterday. "Not only am I ready to play, but it's blowing a gale here in Belfast," he said. "As long as it

RUGBY UNION

By CHRIS HEWETT

stays this way, we'll fancy our chances against the French." At one stage over the weekend, Ulster were contemplating the loss of their entire first-choice midfield; their two international centres, Jonathan Bell and Mark McCall, were considered even more doubtful than Humphreys.

Yesterday, however, Harry Williams and his coaching colleagues were hopeful that all three would make the big occa-

sion. "I've done very little on the physical front since Toulouse," Humphreys said, "but a game of this magnitude tends to accelerate your recovery."

It should be a wonderful occasion - we've already sold 17,000 tickets for the game and the crowd will be up around 20,000 on the day - and I think we have a genuine chance of victory. We've played some controlled, consistent rugby this season and when you mix that in with a bit of old-fashioned Irishness, you have something quite potent. I'm just relieved I'm going to be a part of it."

Another outside-half, albeit a greybeard by comparison, is also relishing the prospect of an appearance on the big stage. Paul Turner, the Saracens backs coach who turns 40 next month, may play a role in tomorrow night's big London derby with Wasps, thanks to Alain Penard's continuing "dead leg" problems. Turner was given a run-out from the bench during Sunday's victory over Bedford, and even though Saracens yesterday signed Matt Jones, the London Irish stand-off, on a month's loan, there was every possibility that

the former Wales playmaker would remain in the squad.

"I still feel able to do the job, if asked," Turner said yesterday. "I've kept myself fit and spending so much recent time watching from the sidelines has given me a clearer idea of where we're going wrong in certain situations. Anyway, age is no barrier in my book."

Judging by the way Bath have performed these last six weeks or so, they could use one or two old heads in key positions. Understandably, Andy Robinson, their coach, has recalled Martin Haag, one of his

longest-serving forwards, to the second row for tonight's important match at Sale. Haag, who has been awarded a testimonial season by the club he joined a decade ago, replaces Nigel Redman, who was badly concussed during the early stages of last Saturday's humiliating defeat at Gloucester.

Sale are in an almost equally desperate state, although few sides enjoy a comfortable ride against the Heywood Road three-quarters. The Cheshire club's latest wing discovery, Steve Hanley, has scored six tries in four Premiership outings and

hastened the departure of his England club-mate, Tom Beir, into the bargain. According to the Sale sages, he is an international in waiting. "He can go all the way and he can do it early," said Jim Mallinder, the Sale captain, yesterday. "He is confident, arrogant even, but he's also very level-headed. England have big backs and they have quick backs, but Steve has it all."

Gloucester, who travel to London Scottish in their eternal quest for a decent away victory, bring Dave Sims, the club captain, out of purdah for a rare appearance at lock. Richard

Hill, the Cherry and Whites coach, has repeatedly preferred Mark Cornwall to the more experienced England hand of late, but Cornwall twanged a groin muscle during his outstanding performance at Kingsholm on Saturday and sits out the trip to The Stoop.

Newcastle Falcons' championship-winning captain, Dean Ryan, yesterday left Kingston Park for the Allied Dunbar Premiership Two leaders, Bristol. He said: "It will obviously be a huge wrench to leave Newcastle after so much success over the last three years."

Local prodigy Hewitt happy with the heat

THE AUSTRALIAN teenager Lleyton Hewitt upset Nicolas Kiefer 7-5 6-4 yesterday to launch his defence of the Adelaide men's hardcourt title he won from nowhere a year ago.

Hewitt, 17, won in his home town last year but conceded that he felt the burden of expectation on him when he faced the 35th-ranked German.

"I felt a fair bit of pressure going out there today," he said, admitting he faced a difficult progression, with the dual US Open winner and top seed Pat Rafter of Australia and former world No 1 Jim Courier among this year's lineup. A year ago, Hewitt beat Andre Agassi and countryman Jason Stoltenberg to become, at 15, the lowest ranked singles winner in ATP tour history, finishing the year ranked 113th.

Earlier, the former French Open champion Gustavo Kuerten, Slovakia's Dominik Hrbaty, Stoltenberg and fellow Australian Michael Tabbott and Scott Draper advanced to the second round as court-side temperature hovered at around 40 degrees Celsius for much of the day. Hrbaty celebrated his 21st birthday with a 4-6 6-1 7-5 upset of the eighth seed, Mariano Puerta of Argentina.

As a balmy evening brought some relief, Sweden's Thomas Enqvist, rejuvenated after a foot injury cut short his 1998 season,

TENNIS

fought back from a disappointing first set to beat the Australian Mark Woodforde 6-4 6-4 6-4.

The intense heat was forecast to continue today when Rafter meets Japan's Takao Suzuki and Courier plays Slava Dosedel, of the Czech Republic. Rafter's hopes of rising from fourth to No 1 this year were boosted at the weekend when the current incumbent, Pete Sampras, pulled out of the Australian Open.

Stoltenberg overwhelmed Arnaud Di Pasquale of France in the heat to win 6-1 6-4 but predicted a bright future for the French teenager, who jumped more than 500 places to 81st in 1998. "I think he is a player we will see a lot of," Stoltenberg said. Draper had a tougher battle against the American Justin Gimelstob before forcing the second set to a tie-break and then winning, 3-6 7-6 6-3.

The defending champion Ai Sugiyama of Japan survived a tough test in the first round of the Australian women's hardcourt championships. Sugiyama, the fourth seed, proved too strong for Corina Morariu of the United States, winning 6-2 6-7 6-3 at the Hope Island club on Queensland's Gold Coast. She next faces France's Sarah Pitkowski, a 6-3 6-2 winner over Australia's Alicia Molik.



Sandrine Testud of France upstages Spain's Arantxa Sanchez Vicario in the Hopman Cup yesterday. AP

France, Sweden upset the odds

QUALIFIERS FRANCE caused the second upset of the day at the Hopman Cup mixed teams tournament when they beat top seeds Spain 2-1 in Perth yesterday. France's pairing of Guillaume Raoux and Sandrine Testud upstaged Carlos Moya and Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario 7-5, 7-5 in the mixed doubles to clinch the victory.

Testud ensured France held the upper hand from the outset when she overcame a sluggish Sanchez-Vicario, 6-1, 6-3. Moya, despite suffering from a cold, had beaten a determined Raoux 7-6, 6-3 in an enthralling match to level the scores.

Earlier, Sweden pulled off a surprise victory over the second-seeded United States team of Lindsay Davenport and Jan-Michael Gambill. The Americans took a 1-0 lead when Davenport thrashed Asa Carlson 6-2, 6-0, but that advantage was quickly erased by the world No 4, Jonas Bjorkman, who beat Gambill 6-2, 6-4.

Bjorkman, a player who thrives on a heavy schedule, then piloted the underdogs to

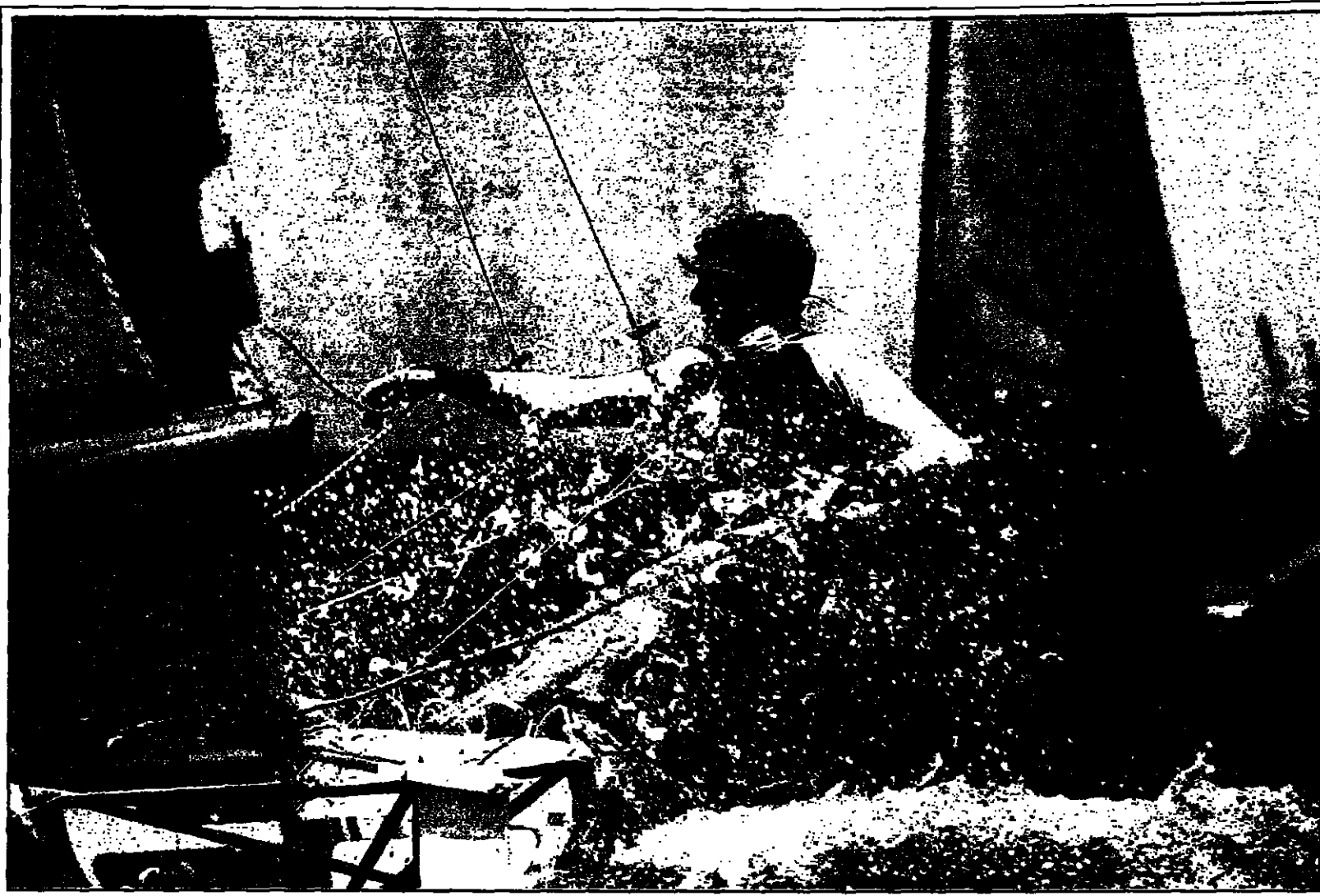
victory in the mixed doubles, with the Swedes prevailing 7-6, 6-4.

Gambill was unhappy at the officiating, complaining that one call in the tie-break was, "the worst I've ever seen". But there was another problem, and the real reason the Americans lost. "In the second set I double-faulted three times in one game, and you can't do that and win a match," he said.

That gave the Swedes a break for 5-4, and Bjorkman served out for the match. It was the first time Bjorkman had played mixed doubles, but he spent some time practising and discussing tactics with Carlson, and it paid off. Their plan was for Bjorkman to crash low at the net every time Carlson served and to leap up and knock off a winning volley.

"Jonas was definitely the key at the net," Gambill said. "He was in the middle of the court and it was really hard knowing where to hit the return."

The only cloud on Bjorkman's horizon is a problem with his right hamstring.



Australia's Mark Fox takes control of his Skiff during the 14-foot team racing international series at Melbourne's Sandringham yacht club yesterday. Fox, along with Greg Coutts, was one of the four two-man teams who clinched victory for the host nation. Allsport

Crew use shirts to plug leak

TEAM NEW ZEALAND

sailors tore off their shirts and formed a bucket brigade to save their America's Cup-winning boat from sinking in the Hauraki Gulf yesterday.

Black Magic II began taking on a few miles north of Rangitoto Island on Monday afternoon after her rudder broke loose. The crew of the boat, one of the two in which New Zealand won the Cup in 1995, heard a bang and rushed below deck, finding themselves knee-deep in water. The Team New Zealand designer, Tom Schnackenberg, who was on board, said it was all hands below deck to stop the boat from going under.

SAILING

By STUART ALEXANDER

"The water was coming in pretty fast," he said. "The boys took their shirts off and we were chucking them around the hole to try to plug it up."

"We had the bucket brigade going and we were using our drink pump, which makes fresh water, to try to empty it out."

The local coastguard came to the boat's rescue with three larger pumps and the Auckland police launch Deodar arrived with another.

"If we hadn't been able to stop the water coming in, we would

have sunk easily," Schnackenberg said. "If the hull was weaker around the rudder we would have been in a lot more trouble."

Black Magic II, or NZL38, had been racing against the other black boat, NZL32, Black Magic I, when it hit trouble. A crewman, Barry McKay said no one was sure what had happened. Three of the crew dived into the sea and eventually removed the broken rudder.

"There's a possibility that we hit something," McKay said. "We couldn't move the boat because the rudder was flopping around, damaging the bottom of the boat."

Once the seawater was

drained, the yacht was towed back to the America's Cup village at the Viaduct Basin by Team New Zealand towboats. Black Magic II is likely to be out of the water for repairs for the next two days, team officials said.

The challenger series for the America's Cup starts in October, carrying through to the finals next January and February.

With the Australian team winning a protest over their British rivals after finishing tied for the international series at Sandringham Yacht Club in Melbourne, the prize for the 14-foot Skiffs went turn and turn about to the two countries.

The Australian B team also edged out Britain B in the struggle for third and fourth places.

The event is one of 16 world championships being run around Melbourne's harbour over the next two weeks, seven of them for the Olympic classes, with nearly 2,000 sailors from around the world competing.

In Auckland, the United States-based Frenchman, Jean-Pierre Moulin, won the 50-foot Class II second leg of the Around Alone Race from Cape Town. He beat not only Britain's Mike Garside into second place but also finished ahead of Josh Hall, who has yet to finish in his new Class 160-footer Gartmore.

Maier still the one to beat

HERMANN MAIER is determined not to lose his appetite for Alpine skiing when the men's World Cup circuit resumes this week.

The Austrian enters 1999 the way he started 1998, as the overall leader. The double Olympic gold medalist has a 103-point margin over the Norwegian Lasse Kjus. Maier aims to outclass his rivals in Kranjska Gora, where a giant slalom opens the year's competition today. The Slovenian resort close to the Austrian border also hosts a slalom tomorrow.

"You can lose your enjoyment of the sport when the schedule is so tight," Maier said.

Maier said his shaky form at the start of the season was because he was too cautious. His

SKIING

performances improved when he stopped thinking about results and resorted to his normal attacking style. With four wins in three disciplines, Maier has one more victory than at the same stage last year and his favourite races lie ahead.

"January was always my strongest month, even last year when it all really kicked off for me in January," he said. "I love competing in front of home crowds and the bulk of Austrian races are yet to come. Maybe Kjus has already given up on the overall title by missing Bormio."

Kjus conceded his overall lead before Christmas in a super-G at Innsbruck when

Maier led a record Austrian sweep of the top nine places.

Fru forced the Norwegian to miss a downhill in Bormio, Italy, on 29 December, which Maier clinched ahead of six team-mates. Tough competition is expected from two other giant slalom winners, Austria's Stephan Eberharter and Switzerland's Michael von Grunigen.

Slalom specialists have a busy schedule with tomorrow's race in Slovenia followed by a floodlit event the next day in Schladming, Austria. The defending slalom champion, Thomas Sykora, plans to make his first appearance of the season in Kranjska Gora after undergoing surgery in November for a recurring knee injury.

No show Stevens

KIRK STEVENS, the Canadian who returned to the game last summer after a five-season absence, failed to turn up for his first qualifying match of the new year.

It is understood Stevens, who had been due to play Wayne Saidler yesterday in the first round of the Regal Scottish Masters, fell victim to airport closures in Canada, which has been swept by heavy snowstorms. Saidler was given a walk-over.

The 40-year-old, best known for his televised maximum break at the 1984 Benson and Hedges Masters, won only one match at the Plymouth qualifiers, but had been expected to play in yesterday's match, as well as the qualifiers for the

SNOOKER

British Open and Embassy World Championship.

His fellow Canadian Jim Wych supports the snow theory for Stevens' absence. "He had been practising hard and was looking forward to returning to the UK," Wych said. "I don't know which airports were closed at the weekend but what I do know is the fact that here in the Toronto area, we have just experienced the worst snowfall for a decade with two-and-a-half feet falling between Saturday afternoon and Sunday."

Stevens, who lives in Toronto, is due to play Darren Limburg on Thursday in the first round of the British Open qualifying tournament.

TODAY'S FIXTURES

FOOTBALL

7.30 unless stated

AUTO WINDSCREENS SHIELD

NORTHERN SECTION

SECOND ROUND

Darlington v Chesterfield (7.45)

Hull v Wrexham (7.45)

Lincoln City v Hartlepool (7.45)

Reading v Stoke (7.45)

Wigan v Scarborough (7.45)

SOUTHERN SECTION

Bournemouth v Peterborough (7.45)

Brighton v Millwall (7.45)

Cambridge Utd v Northampton (7.45)

Exeter v Southend (7.45)

Luton v Walsall (7.45)

Swansea v Gillingham (7.45)

Torquay v Fulham (7.15)

Wycombe v Brentford (7.45)

TELEVISION SCOTTISH CUP

Striving Albion v Maronise

RECREATION IN THE FAI N v Combined Services (at Barton Albion FC)

PURSE CUP

Carlisle v Second round: Carlisle v

Univ. Sussex County League

First Division: Broadbridge Heath v

Reading: Chichester v Selby; Langley

Sports v Haverhill; Litchampten v Hor-

sham WMCs; Ryeham v East Preston

WESTONLEIGH KENT LEAGUE

Premier Division: Deal v Herne Bay; Slade

Gran v Ramsgate; Tunbridge Wells v VCD

Chichester

UHSLEIGH LEAGUE CUP Second

round replay: Bourne v Boston Town

UNIVERSITY COUNTY LEAGUE

First Division: Broadbridge Heath v

Reading: Chichester v Selby; Langley

Sports v Haverhill; Litchampten v Hor-

sham WMCs; Ryeham v East Preston

NORTH WESTERN TRAINING LEAGUE

First Division: Nantwich v Atherton Col-

lins; Cheshire v Mossley; Maine Road v

Atherton LR

JEWELL EASTERN LEAGUE

Premier Division: Wrotham v Falkenham (7.45)

ASSOCIATION FOOTBALL

FA CUP: Arsenal v Liverpool

FA CUP: Arsenal v Liverpool

FA CUP: Arsenal v Liverpool

FA CUP: Arsenal v Liverpool

FA CUP: Arsenal v Liverpool

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FA CUP

1 Arsenal v Liverpool

2 Blackburn v Leeds

3 Coventry v Nottm Forest

4 Everton v Leicester

5 Middlesbrough v Aston Villa

6 Newcastle v Chelsea

7 Sheffield Wed v Tottenham

8 Southampton v Charlton

9 Wimbledon v Derby

10 Swindon v Sheffield Utd

11 West Brom v Barnsley

12 Bradford v Huddersfield

13 Reading v Wrexham

14 Luton v Walsall

15 Swindon v Sheffield Utd

16 Watford v Portsmouth

17 Wigan v Scarborough

18 York v Preston

19 Barnsley v Bolton

20 Blackpool v Man City

21 Bristol Rovers v Burnley

WEEKEND POOLS FORECAST

22 Chesterfield v Colchester

23 Fulham v Macclesfield

24 Lincoln City v Bournemouth

25 Luton v Wycombe

26 Millwall v Wigan

27 Notts County v Oldham

28 Reading v Wrexham

29 Stoke v Northampton

30 Watford v Portsmouth

31 York v Preston

NATIONWIDE LEAGUE

THIRD DIVISION

32 Barnet v Darlington

33 Brighton v Carlisle

34 Cambridge Utd v Torquay

35 Cardiff v Hartlepool

36 Exeter v Swansea

37 Halifax v Peterborough

38 Hull v Rotherham

39 Leyton Orient v Chester

40 Macclesfield v Bury

SCOTTISH LEAGUE

SECOND DIVISION

41 Aberdeen v Celtic

42 Dundee v Rangers

43 Livingston v East Fife

44 Partick v Alloa

45 Stirling v Queen of the South

46 Stirling v Queen of the South

47 Stirling v Queen of the South

48 Stirling v Queen of the South

49 Stirling v Queen of the South

50 Stirling v Queen of the South

51 Stirling v Queen of the South

52 Stirling v Queen of the South

53 Stirling v Queen of the South

54 Stirling v Queen of the South

55 Stirling v Queen of the South

Fifth Test: Australian opener escapes dramatic run-out appeal to punish determined England

Slater strikes with savage force

ENGLAND HAD to endure two controversial umpiring decisions as well as another Michael Slater hundred on another day of drama at the Sydney Cricket Ground. But, if the mistakes were unfortunate, Slater's century, his seventh in 16 Tests against England, was a spectacle few will forget in a hurry. If some hundreds are compiled, this one was created by a man whose boldness and power made light of a crumbling pitch on which just one of his teammates made double figures.

There must be something about England's bowling attack that inspires Slater like no other, and well though Peter Such and Dean Headley bowled they were powerless against his muscular stroke-play and nimble footwork. Indeed, so dominate was his 123 that it contributed 66.65 per cent of his side's total, a percentage only bettered in Tests by Charles Bannerman, who contributed 67.34 per cent of the innings total in the first-ever match between Australia and England.

On a pitch now turning extravagantly such took 5 for 81, though he might have gone for far less had Slater not been about. Using his feet to negate the spin, he hit Such for three sixes, two of them over long-off. It is an area only players of great power and nerve would contemplate against a ball turning in to them.

But if they were the biggest hits, his most savage were saved for Darren Gough, who in spite of his hat-

BY DEREK PRINGLE
in Sydney

Australia 322 & 184
England 220 & 104-2

trick on the first evening had looked off colour. Returning from the Paddington End, Gough's three overs cost him 24 as Slater unleashed a series of lofted off-drives that Ian Botham and Gordon Greenidge would have struggled to hit harder.

One of them, a skimming blow that took about a second to crash into the boundary boards, brought up his hundred, a feat that took 165 balls. In fact, with Alex Tudor mysteriously bowling just five overs, only Headley, who once again bowled superbly to take 4 for 40, escaped punishment.

"I kept it as simple as I could," Slater said, explaining his masterful innings. "I decided to play my natural game and treat every ball on its merits. There was no point me being there if I wasn't scoring and, as far as I was concerned, I was just putting away the bad ball."

Slater needed luck, however, and it came when he was on 35. Batting with Mark Waugh, who clipped an off-break from Peter Such to straight mid-wicket, Slater, feeling a two was on, called Waugh through for a second run. What he did not reckon on was Headley's brilliant pick-up and throw from the deep, a return that hit the stumps at the bowler's end with Slater stretching to make his ground.

The response of the England players in the vicinity was unanimous and the back-slapping had commenced before umpire Steve Dunne called for the TV replay. Slater appeared pretty sure of his shortfall too, though he later denied it, saying he removed his gloves because he knew the umpire would "take quite a while to make his decision."

The man that needed convincing, however, was the third umpire, Simon Taufel, who had officiated in England's game against Queensland in Cairns. Taufel had already given Justin Langer not out in this match to a direct hit in the first innings. On that occasion, almost everybody else who saw that particular replay felt Langer, although close, was in fact out.

Slater also looked out, though the angle of the replay camera (only one per end as provided), as with Langer, was not precisely square on. To compound matters, Such, who was preparing to receive Headley's throw, had his leg in the way of one camera. Other angles, it also less than categorical, also provided strong circumstantial evidence that Slater had failed to make his ground.

"My first thoughts were that it was out," Slater said. "But only because direct hits that look close tend to find the batsman out of his ground. From the camera angles the third umpire had, it was the best decision he could make."

"I got the benefit of the doubt because of the camera angles. At the end of the day the umpire can only make a judgement on what he saw."

Taufel, a printer by occupation, has clearly read Bertrand Russell or, if not him, at least the letter of complaint sent by Graham Gooch to the match referee in Adelaide. It was there, remember, that the third umpire had given Michael Atherton out, apparently in world-record time, after a dubious catch at slip by Mark Taylor had been referred to a replay.

Here the extra umpire appeared to dwell so long over his decision (at least four to five minutes seemed to elapse) that existential dread probably set in. England, it seems, had been hoisted by their own petard.

Yet whether Slater was in or out, the technology has once again been found wanting. If replays are going to be used for run-outs, the International Cricket Council must insist on countries using four dedicated cameras. In Australia, cameras would cost about A\$6,000 (£2,250) to hire, although yesterday's announcement by the ICC that financial backing for any such schemes will not be forthcoming means that for the time being, costs must be met by sponsorship, as is already the case in South Africa. Yet, while cricketing nous remains in short supply among some umpires, nothing less will do.

Such incidents can have far-reaching costs and if you took away the 88 runs Slater scored after the incident, England, now needing a weighty 287 to win, would have required just under 200. Mind you, had Slater failed, someone like Steve Waugh, despite coming in at No 7 with a dodgy hamstring, would probably have taken up the mantle.

Fretting over "what might have been" has been known to distract sides, who take their eye off the ball. If the matter did not distract England did not show it and, having eventually bowled Australia out for 184, they began their innings positively, taking four boundaries off five balls in the opening two overs.

In view of the deteriorating pitch, both Alec Stewart and Mark Butcher had obviously decided to play shots at the pace bowlers while the ball was still hard. It was a sound tactic, though one that ultimately came unstuck when Taylor turned to spin and, more specifically, to Shane Warne.

On Sunday, Warne had taken a wicket with his fourth ball back in



Australia's Michael Slater lashes a ball from Darren Gough to the boundary yesterday

Test cricket. This time he had to wait until his sixth to bamboozle Butcher with a top-spinner delivered from wide on the crease; so wide in fact that his back foot cut the side crease and should have been called by umpire Dunne as a no-ball.

It is not the first time Dunne has missed something - he was the umpire who gave Atherton not out after he gloved Allan Donald at Trent Bridge. Of course, TV cameras, powerless to retrieve the batsman on this occasion, caught it as clear as day. Still, it was a foolish bit of batting, and Butcher's cavalry charge, more in hope than command, was no

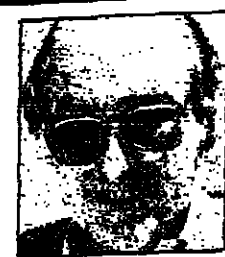
match for Warne's beautifully conceived piece of cunning.

Following his steady but unspectacular showing in the first innings, Warne had been contacted by his spin guru, Terry Jenner. Whatever the advice, it seems to have had an effect and, not long after bamboozling Butcher, he ripped three big turning leg-breaks past Nasser Hussain's bat. Stewart, too, continued his positive vein against the spinners, twice clubbing Stuart MacGill for leg side boundaries against the spin. There is a thin line between being positive and acting in a reckless manner, and Stewart, this time using his feet to

try and hit MacGill over the top, overstepped the mark. Like his brother-in-law he perished well short of his ground as Ian Healy, ever alert to human lunacy, whipped off the balls.

Aussies like Ian Chappell have long advocated batsmen using their feet to wrist-spinners. What Chappell does not tell those he advises, especially if they play for England, is that Australians have been doing it since the age of nine. To begin during the fourth innings on a turning pitch in the final Test of the series was unwise. After all, it was rash shot selection that Slater overcame to get back into the Australian team. So it is curable.

Innings evokes a dash of Denis



HENRY BLOFELD
IN SYDNEY

AFTER THREE such incredible days of cricket, it is almost impossible to be cool, dispassionate and reflective about any of it. Michael Slater's innings was one of those which everyone who saw it will remember to their dying day. Of course, he might have been given run out by the third umpire when he was only 35, and probably should have been, but even that cannot alter the essential fact that this was one of the most phenomenal innings in the history of Test cricket.

It was not Slater's fault that, from the pictures he saw, the third umpire was unable to make up his mind. Slater is the most ebullient of cricketers. He thrashed jubilantly about him in the second innings in Brisbane and he did something similar - in a slightly lower key - at Adelaide, but this left the other two far behind.

It was technically brilliant in a dashing, extrovert way which all too few cricketers are prepared to attempt these days, let alone able to accomplish. He was on the look-out for runs from the first ball of the innings and an early cut behind square for four off Dean Headley made one sit up and take notice. By then, Mark Taylor had gone and, when Slater repeated the stroke, Justin Langer was back in the pavilion.

This was the growing context of the innings. Wickets were continually falling at the other end and Slater must have found on him the extreme pressure of the situation, in that Australia might then have been losing a match from a potentially impregnable position.

Slater must also have been all too aware of how important it was that he did not get himself out. Yet he never gave the faintest impression that either thought had even crossed his mind.

In 1947, 1948 and thereabouts, Denis Compton may well have batted like this and if he did, one can understand why those who were lucky enough to be able to enjoy and appreciate him say that there has never been anyone quite like him. Slater now, with his daring footwork, some cheeky improvisations and the glorious, darting extrovert flair, cannot have been so very far behind him.

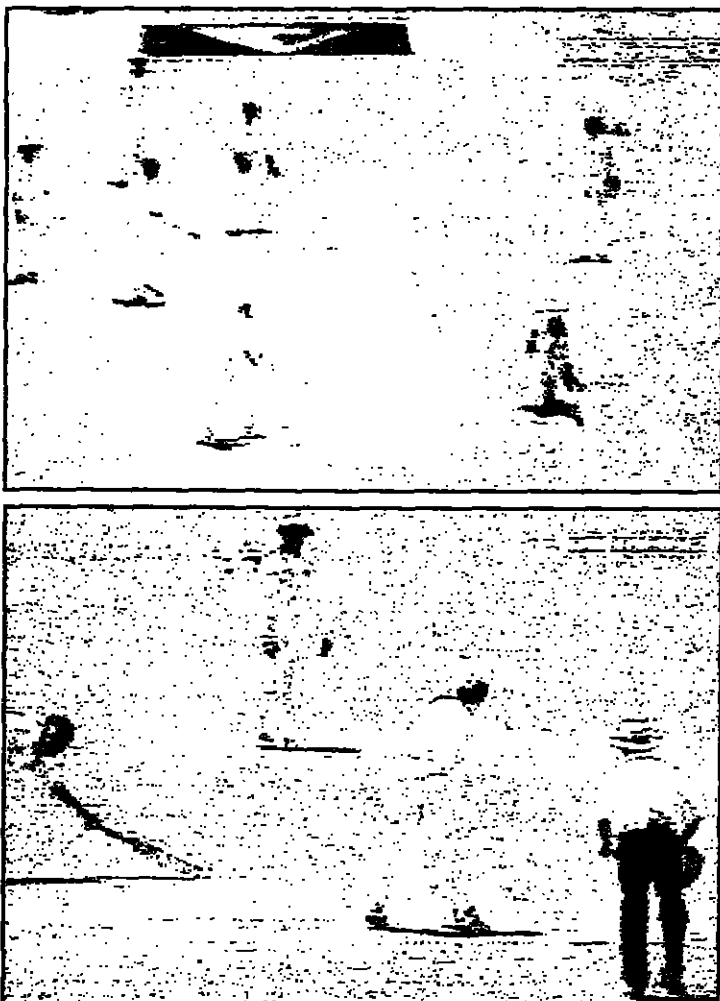
The statistics of Slater's innings, considering this was one played on a pitch which was turning square (although admittedly against only one spinner) were amazing. Perhaps the most intriguing of all was the fact that Slater scored a higher percentage of his side's runs than any other batsman but one in a Test match since the very first innings of all, in Melbourne back in March 1877.

Slater's driving was the best and most exciting of all the strokes he played. He is of medium height and slightly built but he is strong and wiry with that heaven-sent gift of timing which is given to so few. Twice he came down the pitch and drove Peter Such - who bowled his off-breaks admirably - far over mid-off for six and once he spun like Steve Waugh and swept him with violence over mid-wicket for another.

Later, he came down the pitch to Such, drawing away to leg to leave himself a little room, and drove gloriously through extra cover. Graeme Hick, who had just been moved back to long-off, was powerless to do anything about it. When Gough came back after lunch, perhaps feeling an ankle, Slater launched into a chubbing cover drive which simply smashed the ball past mid-off for four.

Later in the over, Gough tried a slower one and it disappeared back over his head to the Noble Stand boundary. Needing four for his hundred, Slater again faced Gough and another falling drive through mid-off made sure he did not linger long in reaching that landmark. Come to think of it, I doubt Compton gave the impression of hitting the ball as hard as Slater did now, for his timing was supreme and his touch so felicitous.

After tea, Slater returned to multiple applause, immediately played another cut at Headley, got an edge and departed to the standing ovation to end all standing ovations. His departure left us feeling limp and exhausted, yet as exhilarated as one might be after watching a high-wire trapeze act at a circus, performed without a safety net. Cricket has not seen a much better high-wire act than this, and I can assure you, there was no safety net.



Peter Such obscures the view of Slater's close call

West Indies clinging on

AIDED BY unusual South African generosity in the field, the West Indies scrambled their way out of the follow-on on the third day of the fourth Test yesterday, but still face two more days of tough grind if they are to avoid their fourth successive defeat.

Jonty Rhodes dropped Carl Hooper at cover point in the day's first over. Paul Adams let Ridley Jacobs' skier through his grasp at deep mid-on, the wicketkeeper Mark Boucher watched Otis Gibson's edge fly past his right hand and a substitute, Ashwell Prince, put down Nixon McLean's deep-field dolly, all before the West Indies had reached their goal of 207.

Through their chances, the West Indies, 89 for 4 at the start, were finally bowled out at tea for 212. Hooper, 55 when put down, reached 86, the highest West Indies score of the series.

Without the faulty catching, Hanse Cronje would have had the option, and psychological advantage, of sending his dispirited opponents back in. However, his main strike weapon, Allan Donald, was on the treatment table in the team room with a strained left hamstring and the captain might have been relieved not to have to make the decision.

BY TONY COZIER
in Cape Town

South Africa 406-8 dec & 91-3
West Indies 212

A lead of 196 was imposing enough and, even with the early loss of three wickets for no runs in the space of 10 balls, it was a lead extended to 287 with seven wickets intact by the end of the day. There is still ample time for South Africa's bowlers to work their way through the fragile West Indies batting, even on a pitch that is in ideal condition.

South Africa's aerial errors contrasted sharply with their dazzling work on the ground, where the speed, athleticism and accuracy of Herschelle Gibbs, Rhodes and especially Cronje saved countless runs. Hardly an hour has gone by without a defining moment typifying the gap between the teams and Cronje's spectacular run out of Hooper was another. Casually turning for a third run while Cronje chased his drive to within a foot of the boundary, the overweight Hooper sensed too late the danger of a fast, flat, accurate return to the bowler's end and was shown, by the

TV replays, to be a couple of inches short of his ground.

Another 61 were needed to avoid the follow-on with four wickets remaining when he left and only the missed chances allowed the West Indies to get there. When South Africa batted a second time, their progress was slowed by the loss of Gibbs, Gary Kirsten and Daryl Cullinan, before reaching the close at 91 for 3.

Third day South Africa won toss
SOUTH AFRICA - First innings: 406-8 dec (H Kallis 110, D J Cullinan 166).
WEST INDIES - First innings: (Overnight: 89 for 4)
C L Hooper not out (crouching) 86
D Ganga c Kirsten b Pollock 17
R D Jacobs c Kallis b Pollock 25
O D Gibson c Kirsten b Kallis 37
N A M McLean c Cronje b Adams 14
C E L Ambrose not out 4
M Ellison c Boucher b Kallis 0
Extras (2lb, 3lb, 2w) 7
Total (85 overs) 212
Fall (85 overs): 6-146, 7-164, 8-199, 9-210, 10-212.
Bowling: Donald 61-20-3, Pollock 22-9-35-2, Tabor 22-42-0, Dillon 10-21-15-1, Hooper 5-7-0, Chanderpaul 10-21-0.
SOUTH AFRICA - Second innings:
G Kirsten c Murray b McLean 5
H H Kallis not out 25
J H Kallis not out 25
D J Cullinan not out 0
D J Cullinan not out 0
W J Cronje not out 32
Extras (1w) 1
Total (for 3, 38 overs) 91
Fall: 1-31, 2-31, 3-31.
Bowling (no date): McLean 9-1-25-2; Gibson 10-2-42-0; Dillon 10-21-15-1; Hooper 5-7-0; Chanderpaul 10-21-0.
Umpires: S Venkatraghavan (Ind) and D O'Rand (SA).

England overcome Academy

THE LANCASHIRE left-hander Neil Fairbrother led the way as England's one-day team beat the Queensland Academy of Sport by 44 runs in a rain-shortened practice match in Brisbane yesterday.

Fairbrother hit 68 from 75 balls with four boundaries and two sixes in an England total of 214 for 6 from 38 overs.

The openers Nick Knight (48) and Vince Wells (21) made sound contributions for England, who then bowled economically to keep the Queenslanders at bay. The tourists managed to restrict the home team to 170 for 7.

England's joint spin attack of Robert Croft and Ashley Giles were the pick of the bowlers. Croft finishing with 2 for 24 and Giles taking 2 for 23 from their five overs each. Martin Love was the top scorer for Queensland with an unbeaten 67, but the Academy fell well short of the required target.

Dravid helps India stay afloat in Test

THE INDIAN batsman, Rahul Dravid, scored a fine 190 yesterday to steer the tourists to a first innings lead of 50 against New Zealand in the third Test.

Dravid, helped by 76 from the tailender Jagavallu Srinath, was the backbone of India's 416, in which seven batsmen failed to shine. At stumps on the third day, New Zealand were five runs behind, having added 45 runs without loss to their first innings total of 366.

Dravid, who had helped repair the innings on Sunday after both openers went cheaply filled the breach again when India lost two early wickets to slump to 211 for 7. In the first half-hour Nayan Mongia went for seven and Anil Kumble for a duck. Dravid and Srinath rescued India from a first innings deficit with a record partnership of 144, beating by one run India's previous best eighth-wicket stand against New Zealand, between Bapu Nadkarni and Faruk Engineer in Madras in 1964-65.

"Whenever I felt tired or felt I was losing concentration, I looked at Srinath and felt refreshed and determined to keep on batting,"

New Zealand 366 & 45-0
India 416

Dravid said after amassing his highest Test score. Dravid's knock lasted just over eight hours and included 28 boundaries, but fatigue finally got the better of him. He was caught after playing a tired-looking shot off Cairns.

Third day India won toss
NEW ZEALAND - First innings: 366 (C D McMillan 52, R G Tweed 87, M J Horne 63).
INDIA - First innings:
N S Dravid c Parore b Cairns 190
A D Jadeja c Nash b Doull 12
S R Dravid c McMillan b Cairns 190
S R Tendulkar b Nash 67
S C Ganguly c Fleming b Doull 11
M Azharuddin c Fleming b Cairns 4
IN R Mongia c Horne b Nash 4
A Kumble c Parore b Doull 7
J Srinath c Tweed b Wiseman 76
B V K Prasad not out 30
R Singh c Fleming b Cairns 10
Extras (2 lb, 4 lb, 1 w) 18
Total (128.5 overs) 416
Fall: 1-17, 2-17, 3-126, 4-164, 5-195, 6-204, 7-211, 8-355, 9-416.
Bowling: Doull 36-15-64-3; Cairns 22-3-107, 4 (nb); Nash 37-10-98-2 (w-4); Victor 16-17-1-0 (nb-1); McMillan 4-0-24-0; Wiseman 15-2-40-1.
NEW ZEALAND - Second innings:
M D Bell not out 18
M J Horne not out 18
Extras (1 lb, 1 w) 2
Total: (for 0, 16 overs) 45
Bowling: Prasad 8-2-15-0; Singh 2-0-15-0 (w-1); Srinath 2-1-4-0; Kumble 4-2-6-0.
To bats: S P Fleming, R G Tweed, C D McMillan, A C Parore, C L Cairns, D L Nash, D L Victor, S Doull, P J Wiseman.

SPORT

WILLIAMS' ULSTER MISSION P18 • WORLD CUP WAR HOTS UP P23

Wiseman's
exit signals
FA scramble

KEITH WISEMAN did not go quietly when he finally quit as chairman of the Football Association yesterday but his final denials of wrong-doing were swiftly drowned out by the manifestoes for change being issued by his potential successors.

Wiseman had spoken for an hour at the FA Council's meeting at Centre Point, central London, before accepting he would not sway the popular mood baying for his head. His resignation follows the exposure of a £3.2m payment offered to the Football Association of Wales in return for its vote in the game's chambers of power.

The attention swiftly moved to a Lancaster Gate hotel where three putative successors were gathered to enter the Southampton coroner's career in football politics. They were there to bury Wiseman, not to praise him, and there was talk of a "new dawn", the game "moving forward" and "unity".

Behind the smiles, however, Geoff Thompson, the acting chairman until an election is held in June, David Sheepshears and David Richards were plotting their campaigns. None have formally announced their intention to stand - only Ken Bates, the Chelsea chairman has declared himself - and there will be much horse-trading before nominations close in May, but all have an eye on the prize.

Before the election, Thompson and David Davies, the acting chief executive, will be going to Fifa, Uefa and Scottish and Northern Irish FA's to "apologise" for the FA's recent conduct in its pursuit of the 2006 World Cup. "Bridges need to be built", Thompson said. Davies added: "Lessons need to be learned" in respect of the World Cup bid.

The pair will also try and implement change to the Council itself on the back of a working party report into restructuring the FA which is to be published later this month. Should they succeed in this difficult task, they may end up working together permanently.

FOOTBALL
BY GLENN MOORE

Thompson, who seems certain to be the candidate of choice for the amateur game, will first have to fight off the challenge from within the professional ranks. That will come from Sheepshears or Richards. The latter has the Premiership's support, the former is more likely to win an election. Bates, the outsider, chose not to speak to the media yesterday, leaving Centre Point by the back door. It is understood he played only a minimal part in the council meeting.

WHO WILL BE THE
NEXT FA CHAIRMAN?

David Sheepshears
Ipswich chairman, aged 46. Impressed with stewardship of the Football League where he recently stepped down as chairman. Well-groomed, ambitious and smart. The favourite.

Geoff Thompson
Sheffield & Hallamshire FA, 53. Yorkshire magistrate and barrister. Failed in attempt to become chairman in 1996 but will hold position until June election. Prominent representative of the FA Council's backdrop, the county FA's Second favourite.

David Richards
Sheffield Wednesday chairman, 55. Preferred choice of the Premier League two years ago, he finished third behind Wiseman and Thompson, having failed to attract votes from elsewhere.

Ken Bates
Chelsea chairman, 67. Already campaigning via the tabloid press. Long, controversial and ultimately successful stewardship at Stamford Bridge. Would attempt radical change. Rank outsider.

Davies, meanwhile, is yet to declare himself a candidate for the chief executive's position, which is unlikely to be filled before June. However, his talk of "vision" and "unity" was not out of place among the preliminary campaigning.

Wiseman left with a sop, the council unanimously recording, in his words, that they "wish to make it clear that no aspersions have been cast on my integrity or honesty". As a coroner by trade that was important to him, though it begged the question as to why he had been forced to resign.

Thompson said it was because of two "grave errors" of judgement, first in agreeing the deal with the Welsh (part of a failed attempt to gain a seat on world body Fifa's executive), and secondly in not passing it through the relevant FA committee.

Wiseman, who will retain his position on the board at Southampton, will not be lamented. A compromise choice when elected in the summer of 1996, he managed to alienate both professional and amateur sides of the game. He was said by Davies to have told the council he was "sorry" but there was no mention of an apology in his statement.

Whether his successor will fare any better depends whether the reforms, promoted by Durham's Frank Pattison, succeed. "We are endeavouring to streamline the board [which has 90 members] while retaining its broad base," he said.

Pattison chastised Bates for his recent pronouncements in the press, which have included criticism of England coach Glenn Hoddle and other FA staff.

"Some of these were unfortunate for a director of a company," the 62-year-old solicitor said. "Inaccurate information was given out on subjects which should not be in the public domain. Some of the comments attributed to him would be a masterpiece in de-motivation of staff."

A six-month election campaign to stretch yesterday's "unity" now seems inevitable. This was illustrated when the group were asked what abilities the new chairman would require. Thompson said: "Integrity, leadership, vision, an ability to understand the whole of the game and convince the council of the need for change." Sheepshears, the businessman, agreed, but added "business management skills".

Not mentioned were an astute political antenna, patience, luck, a thick skin and eyes in the back of your head - to see the knives being sharpened.



The former FA chairman Keith Wiseman leaves the Centre Point building, London, under guard following his resignation yesterday. *Allsport*

Sharpe signs for Sampdoria
to end Elland Road nightmare

LEE SHARPE yesterday became David Platt's first signing as Sampdoria manager when he joined the Italian club on loan for the rest of the season.

The Leeds winger, put on the transfer list by the Elland Road manager, David O'Leary, last year, has moved to the Serie A club with a view to a permanent transfer. A United spokeswoman confirmed: "Lee Sharpe flew out to Italy today and has joined Sampdoria on loan."

Sharpe, a former England international, together with Tomas Rolin, was the Yorkshire club's record signing, costing the then manager, Howard Wilkinson, £4.5m when he moved from Manchester United in 1996. However, a serious knee injury set him back and even when he was fit, he fell out of favour with George

BY WYN GRIFFITHS

Graham and then O'Leary. He has made three starts for Leeds this season, the last against Roma in the Uefa Cup on 3 November.

The Nottingham Forest chief executive, Phil Soar, has dismissed speculation that Ron Atkinson, the former Aston Villa and Sheffield Wednesday manager, is poised to take over as manager at the City Ground. Dave Bassett's future as the Forest manager is uncertain - the club have gone a record 17 Premier League games without a win and crashed out of the FA Cup at the hands of Portsmouth on Saturday.

Atkinson's name has been linked with a possible return to management with Forest, but Soar said: "As far as I'm con-

cerned the manager's position remains unchanged. I know nothing about Ron Atkinson."

The Everton manager, Walter Smith, is ready to raid his former Glasgow opponents, Celtic, for the striker Simon Donnelly. The former Rangers manager is poised to open discussions with Donnelly to talk him into joining the Merseysiders either now or in the summer.

Smith could offer a nominal fee to Celtic for Donnelly of around £200,000 to sign him or wait until he is a free agent at the end of the season. Donnelly has rejected a new contract at Celtic and has been linked with Monaco, but a move to Everton is more likely.

ITV were yesterday unrepentant in the face of criticism from leading managers about

the timing of the fourth round draw for the FA Cup. Sheffield Wednesday's Danny Wilson and Bruce Riech, of Norwich, complained after the draw was staged at 4pm on Sunday, while the round three tie between their two sides was still taking place.

However, Carol Millward, of ITV, insisted the channel was well within its rights to hold it immediately after the Port Vale-Liverpool tie, which was screened live by the channel.

"We have a contractual agreement with the FA to show the draw and it made absolute sense that we show the draw at the end of our match, when the highest number of football fans are watching," she said.

"The FA were happy with the choice of slot. It was agreed with them that we would do it

at that time and from a television point of view, it's the most obvious time to do the draw."

The former Crystal Palace midfielder Darren Pitcher is taking legal action against Huddersfield and defender Paul Reid, who has left the club. The Terriers, who have had a writ served on them by solicitors acting for Pitcher, insist they will defend any action.

The lawsuit has been filed after a challenge between the players in the match at the McAlpine Stadium on 31 August 31, 1996, which left Pitcher with damaged cruciate ligaments.

Two months ago, the Bradford striker Gordon Watson won a High Court claim for negligence against Huddersfield and their defender Kevin Gray after he suffered a broken leg in a First Division match.

Extra cameras not on ICC's agenda

THE INTERNATIONAL Cricket Council has said that it will not provide financial backing to any programme aimed at improving the third umpire system following a disputed and possibly crucial ruling in the fifth Ashes Test in Sydney. England's hopes of drawing the series with Australia were dealt a potentially severe blow when Steve Taufel failed to give Michael Slater run out when he appeared to be short of his ground. Slater, on 35 at the time, went on to make 123 out of a total

CRICKET
BY STEVEN BAKER

of 184, leaving the tourists needing 287 to win at the Sydney Cricket Ground and move level in the series at two games each. England may yet triumph but should they fail, Taufel's decision will be identified as the turning point in the deciding Test.

However, the ICC is rejecting suggestions that it should invest in a scheme to set up four fixed cameras level with the

wickets at each side of the ground. "We're not looking to fund it at this stage," Clive Hitchcock, the ICC's cricket operations manager, said.

"There's a huge cost involved in doing it. Some countries are going down that road and providing square-angle cameras at each end - South Africa have that and it is sponsored by Panasonic."

"It's something that we're working on because some countries provide better facilities than others and we're look-

ing to see if we can make it standard across the board."

"But it's the responsibility of the home board to provide camera angles in liaison with the host broadcaster and at this stage, we're not looking to fund it ourselves."

Repeated television replays made it seem Slater was short of his crease after the stumps were broken by Dean Headley's direct hit from deep mid-on. He was given the benefit of the doubt, but even the Australian opener believes it is time for

more cameras to be used to stop similar controversies. "If you're going to have the third umpire, then get the cameras in place so it is conclusive," he said.

Hitchcock added: "When the third umpire makes his decision, he's got to be 100 per cent sure that the batsman is out. If he's not, the benefit of the doubt goes to the batsman. I guess the guy has applied that when he's looked at the television replays."

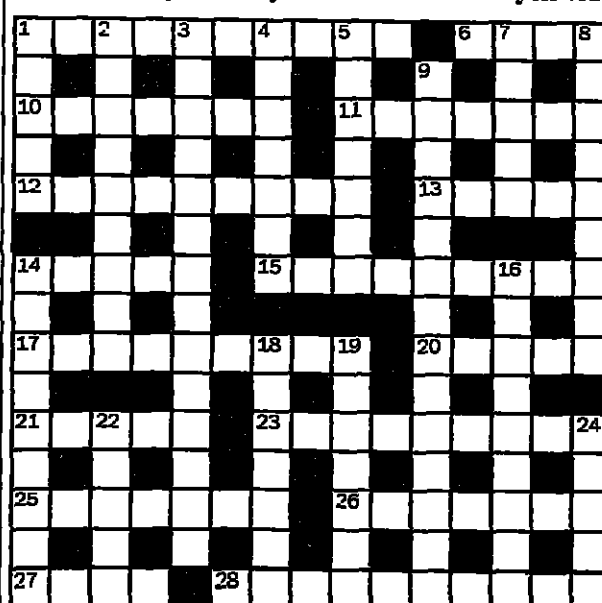
Derek Pringle,
Henry Blofeld, page 22

THE TUESDAY CROSSWORD

No.3811 Tuesday 5 January

by Aelred

Monday's Solution



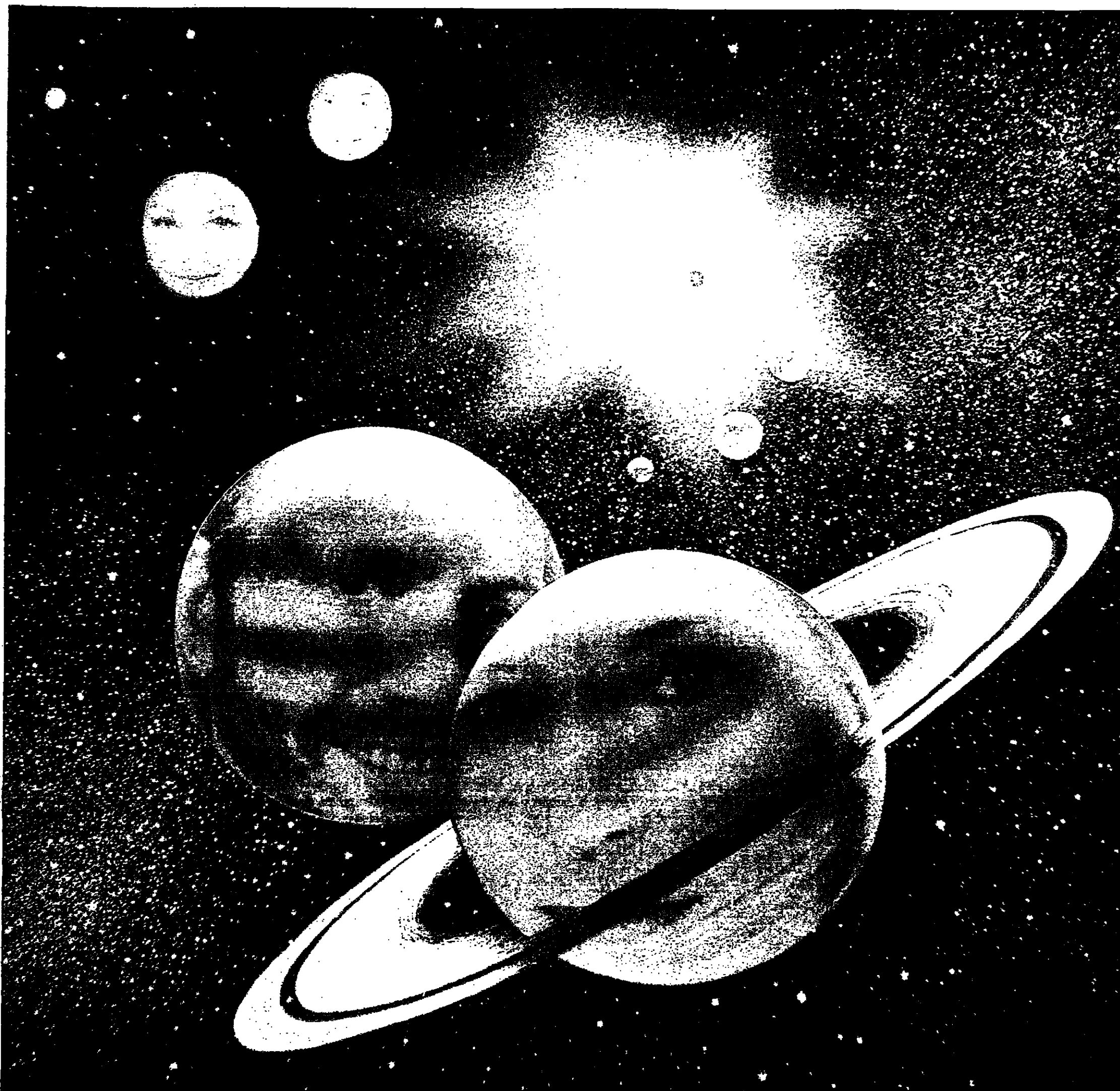
- ACROSS**
- One having no difficulty as Mr Chips? (4,6)
 - Fish? That's a thought (4)
 - Not literally mix with Romans? (7)
 - One in clear might be discharged as such? (7)
 - Luddite hates loom as being detestable (9)
 - Name only applied to man-made fabric (5)
 - Marriage service in church left by Communist male (5)
 - Will try a time to capture soldiers (9)
 - Intoxicate about 2 males to cause a mess (9)
 - Lengthy delivery from doctor with implement (5)

- Poor diva holds piano to be flat (5)
- Estimated distance round king left no space (6,3)
- Don't travel enough to suffer (7)
- A waiver in reuse of channel (7)
- Work regularly back to cover English sound? (4)
- Different agreements about territory right in the past (10)

- DOWN**
- Write to gangster of his servitude? (5)
 - Give resume of season's lookers, we hear (9)
 - Dismissal of strutting Jesuits etc? (8,8)
 - Achieve success as vendor in open market? (4,3)
 - Priest replaced conservative in too much, say (7)
 - Live as wife in depression (5)
 - Reportedly against province about to come to birth (9)
 - Norm's one who puts up with outstanding leader (8,6)
 - Take words back to keep 5 of us from revolting (9)
 - A woman with power has to speak and vanish (9)
 - It locates one of us capitally? (3,4)
 - Delight in French monastic singing (7)
 - After games boy rose to use bike (5)
 - You and I will enter territory that's comparatively quaint (5)

TUESDAY REVIEW

COMMENT • FEATURES • ARTS • LISTINGS • TELEVISION



We are all of us in the gutter, but some of us are looking at the stars (top to bottom) Russell Grant, Shelley Von Strunckel, Jonathan Cainer and Marjorie Orr

What planet are you on?

Ye gods, what a year. "Sorting out a more satisfactory emotional base" for my life was "the driving motivation" for the first half, while "high ambitions" took up the second. My nearest and dearest were a shocking liability throughout. One "family member" acted in "erratic unpredictable ways" in February. A frankly knackered "social whirl" in early spring was followed by "a more demanding mood" in which everyone had "over-high expectations" of me, the fools. Everyone in my entire life seemed "on edge" in April, but then "joint finances" improved and I threw myself into a "secret romance" which, all too predictably, I'm afraid, made 20 April "sticky".

I was "emotionally topsy-turvy" on 7 May but, bang on cue, "finances" improved again, once they were given my "wholehearted attention". My "sunny charm" knocked everyone dead in early summer, enabling me to keep my "hidden agenda" up my sleeve, before I legged it to "fly free" to "greener pastures". But sadly, by July my life had descended into turmoil once more: an eclipse of the sun warned me that "a career push" was "vital", and it was all I could do to stop myself being "distracted" by "emotional muddles". Sadly, my professional clear-sightedness didn't stop another bout of "sticky moments" and I strove unavailingly to "keep my temper steady", "hold to compromises", and "find a middle way between neither pushing too hard nor being pushed around".

My family, not surprisingly, found themselves "on tenterhooks" in August, as I flailed about in this socio-economic maelstrom, and the kindly attention of "close partners" was thwarted as they found, yet again, my "attention diverted to sorting out finances". Honestly, it's like being married to Gordon Brown. As the year drew to a close I narrowly avoided having to "rub up against rather tricky people", and refused to "suffer fools gladly" around my birthday on 24 October, contenting myself with "pulling strings behind the scenes".

I certainly didn't want any "unresolved clutter", as I approached Christmas, and "getting finances into shape", when I'd rather have been out getting sloshed, meant I had to "resist the temptation to fly off the handle". But luckily I found "a gentle way of letting off steam" - possibly at the Priory in Roehampton - and ended the year bravely staring at "the momentous turning-point of the century".

Because, as you will have guessed, the year I've been looking back on with such drained exhaustion is 1998. I've just been reading Marjorie Orr's month-by-month horoscope in *The Express* for my life, right through this year, and by the time I reached the end, I felt like lying down in a cave until it was all over. It's not the "predictions" that bother me - nothing concrete is predicted - it's the prevailing note of frantic emotional activity. According to the clairvoyant Ms Orr, I will spend the year on a roller-coaster of emotion, swinging between confusion and impotent fury, endlessly upset, bothered, undervalued and over-provoked by puzzling spouse and traitorous work colleagues, forever balancing the

BY JOHN WALSH

You don't need to be
Russell Grant to predict
what sells papers
in January. And you
don't need to be
Carol Vorderman to
deduce that our
dependence on the
stars is not entirely
logical. But all the signs
are that horoscopes
have a future

account books and constantly defending myself against strange, unnameable crises.

I do not know Ms Orr, but I suspect she is the kind of friend we all need in a crisis - one of utter unflappable conservatism, whose conversation is a succession of emollient platitudes about casting no clout, taking the rough with the smooth, not throwing out the baby with the bathwater. She would never, you feel, be the one to say, "Oh for God's sake just leave the bastard", or "Of course you should take the job", or "Just try a little snort of this, you'll like it". For she is one of the nation's leading "sun-star columnists" as hack astrologers are sometimes called, and her function is to reassure - to whisper in her readers' ears that, although their lives are amazingly *mouvmentés*, they must try not to be swept away by the stormy emotions and crazy scenes with which their days will be filled.

Astrology is an odd profession, beginning in Babylonian stargazing, 4,000 years ago, made up of equal parts mathematic calculation, astronomy, pagan gods and post-event historico-psychology. It may seem a long way from the divinations of the ancients to the crystal balls of Marjorie Orr, but some things have never changed: the seriousness of its believers (who have included Hitler, Gandhi, Rupert Murdoch and the Abbey National Building Society), the money-spinning potential of its newspaper columns with their phone-line spin-offs (the late Patric Walker, Russell Grant and Mystic Meg have all been reported as earning £500,000 a year) and the extraordinary grip its cryptic bromides still exert on our imaginations. When the Darwinist Professor

Richard Dawkins trashed the whole subject of astrology in *The Independent on Sunday* in 1995, saying that its professional exponents should be jailed for fraud, the resulting correspondence filled acres of newsprint.

At this time of year, it's also a goldmine for newspapers and magazines. When the next 12 months will pitch us straight into a new century and into a whole thousand-year epoch, the whole business takes on a kind of epic urgency: the only thing bigger than the passage of centuries, millennia and eras is the firmament itself, whose stars have outlasted them all, and from which we try to learn what will become of us and how we should live.

Apart from being perhaps the only metaphysical impulse that most of the population will have embraced since the days of choir practice and Sunday school, astrology is also democratic. The stars that are common to all of us, that shone for both Julius Caesar and his chariot-minding slave, are the governing influences upon great and humble alike.

If Mars and Pluto (which rule Scorpio with dynamic and power-crazed ruthlessness, and are the reason girls give Scorpio chaps a wide berth at parties) are both in Sagittarius next September, playing hell with my capacity to make any money, though at least I can be comforted that the Prince of Wales (Scorpio, born 14 November) is in the same yacht. This accounts for the secondary phenomenon of early January - a rash of predictions of how the year will pan out for various "celebrities": how Zoë Ball will have a baby and Jerry Hall will win

Continued on page 8

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								SIX PAGES OF MEDIA

Finally, I think the two oddest girls' names of the year were Arundhati and Dava, both of which had their best year yet. Indeed, both had their first year yet. Good luck to them - and to everyone else - for the coming year.

THE INDEPENDENT

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Banishing a spin doctor will not cure Mr Blair's troubles

CHARLIE WHELAN'S resignation as aide to Gordon Brown casts doubt over the competence of the entire Blair administration. In a well run government, the fate of a press secretary should not make any difference to day-to-day business: actual policies, affecting the lives of every citizen, should dominate the minds of ministers. The immediate cause of the resignation has been press speculation that he leaked the details of Peter Mandelson's loan from Geoffrey Robinson: but his departure is more significant than one official being caught out in the game of "spin". Mr Whelan was not just a press secretary. He was the Chancellor's general aide-de-camp and propagandist. The Chancellor's independent power base has become the problem, whether or not Mr Whelan has done wrong. There is a suspicion that the messenger is being shot, albeit a rather maverick one.

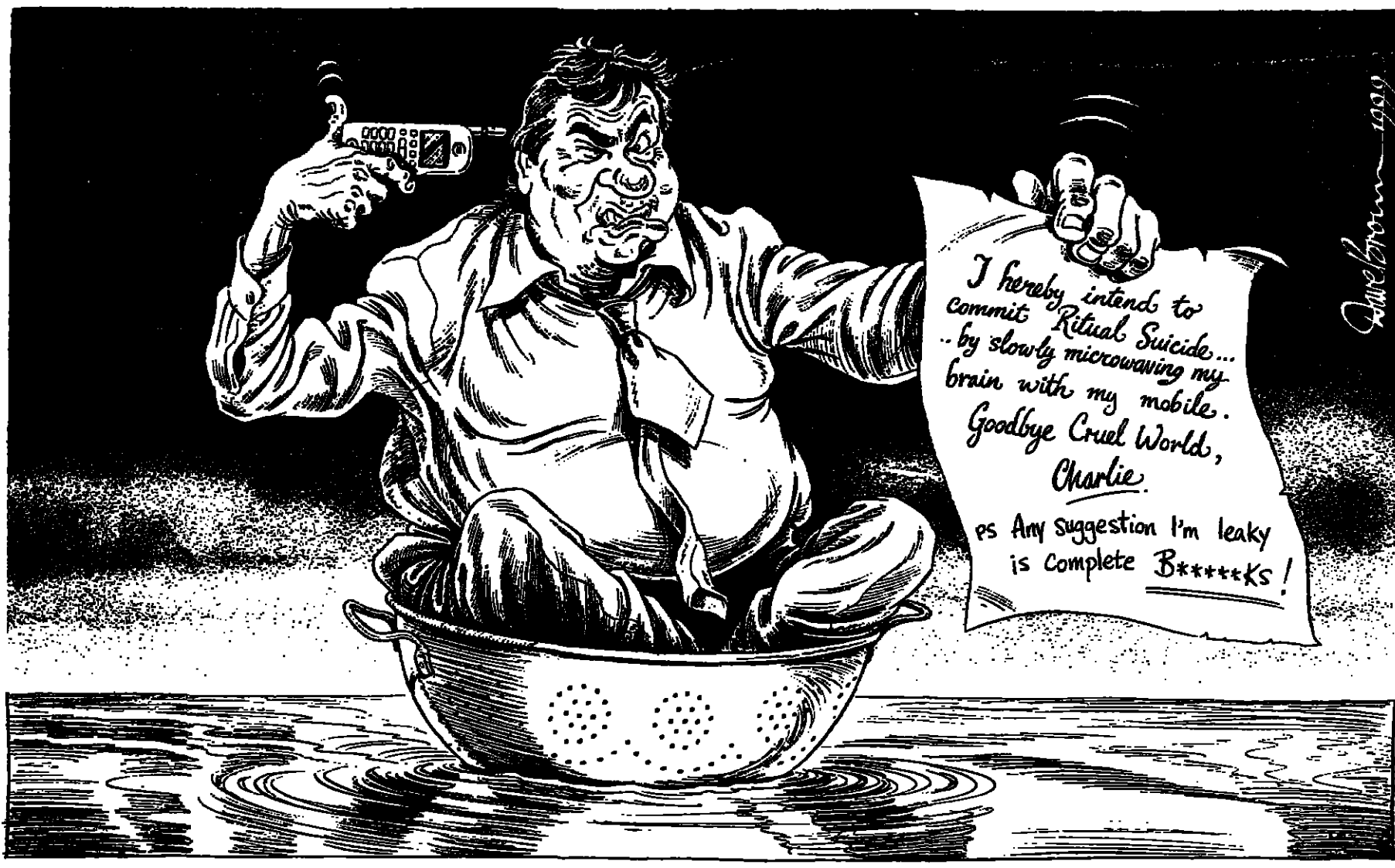
Coincidentally, correspondence between Mr Brown and Mr Mandelson has surfaced in the press, dating from the time of John Smith's death. Whatever its real source, the suspicion was bound to arise that Mr Brown or his staff had released it to damage Mr Mandelson. His well known hurt at not securing the Labour leadership means that whenever his rivals are damaged by media speculation, the finger of suspicion will inevitably point at him.

Mr Brown can continue to nurse his desire to be prime minister. But if he is seen to be doing so with his own alternative court centred around No 11, the damage to the Government will increase. Mr Whelan's departure will not change this, since he would not have done anything major without permission from his boss; it was the Chancellor's wish to eliminate opposition that led to the quarrel with Mr Mandelson in the first place.

It is no good the Government complaining that the media has become "obsessed" with ministerial personalities. This is a real story. When the poison of bitter rivalry enters the Cabinet bloodstream, past experience shows that government can disintegrate. Margaret Thatcher was eventually brought down by the hatred she attracted by bullying ministers such as Geoffrey Howe and Nigel Lawson.

Voters care about education, the economy and health care, not the minutiae of presentation, so New Labour's reliance on "spinners" was always going to land it in trouble. Everything that once seemed admirable about their media strategy is falling to pieces, with what seemed like skill now seen as manipulation. This is worse because Mr Blair and his advisers seem to rely on a network of old friends to do their work. There seems no sign that this will change; yesterday the Prime Minister appointed his old friend Lord Falconer to oversee the Millennium Dome.

Ideological differences have abated since the dark years of continual Labour feuding, but that very lack of



divisive issues makes their rivalry all the more bitter. With no prospect of unilateral nuclear disarmament or nationalisation to argue over, Labour ministers are left to brief against each other's private lives.

Mr Blair may believe that this storm will abate, and plan to promote young Blairites such as Stephen Byers to deny Mr Brown's hopes of succeeding to the leadership, or to divide and rule his Cabinet. If so, he is mistaken. The time taken to establish credible leadership contenders would be spent in perpetual feuding.

The Chancellor's performance itself is on the whole admirable, while Labour's high opinion poll ratings demonstrate that its economic policies are popular. But the personal relationship between a prime minister and chancellor is also vital. This spin doctor's resignation raises hopes that Mr Brown may mend his ways, proving that he can act more responsibly. The hope must be that this is the first sign that the Government is turning away from "spin", and towards grown-up politics.

The struggle to be the champion of football

SEPP BLATTER, president of football's world governing body, Fifa, has suggested that the World Cup should be held every two years. One immediate objection to this is that the idea is part of the struggle for power between Fifa, the governor of global football, and the different Continental authorities such as Uefa, the European governing body. Football rivalries are becoming more virulent as the amount of money involved increases: yesterday Jack Wiseman, for 15 years the chairman of the English Football Association, was forced to resign after being accused of trying to buy seats on Fifa's executive council.

We should look at the principles behind the proposal, rather than focusing on the rivalries surrounding it. There is nothing wrong in marketing football's most valuable prod-

uct so that it makes maximum money for the game. A world game needs a world authority: Fifa is right to restrain regional empire-building.

Commercialisation is a natural part of the improvements football has made over the last few years. Top-level football may now cost more to watch, but hooliganism has mostly been banished from a new generation of stadia bought with new advertising revenue. Eliminating the pointless "friendlies" that litter the season, and replacing them with meaningful qualifying games, could also be a bonus.

Even so, football bosses should beware of devaluing their product. With the Champions League, the domestic League and Cup, regional qualifying competitions and the World Cup itself, top players could find themselves playing too many games. At that level of fitness, small injuries will never have time to heal. Football fans who instinctively warm to the idea of more football should remember that they may be forced to watch their heroes limp around the world, playing worse football the more they compete.

Please sir, may I take my children on holiday to the Seychelles?

TONY BLAIR'S children, as the whole world knows, return tonight from the Seychelles. Not from holiday, but from the Seychelles. These islands ("palm-fringed") to quote Nick Clarke of the BBC are, one senses, thought to be too good for a Labour Prime Minister's family; they should be reserved for those professionals, whose status and hard work qualifies them for a sojourn on powdery beaches, where they will drink mango juice in their hammocks, served by equally palm-fringed Bountiful girls.

Now, either Charlie Whelan was up to his tricks again, or someone had been doing their sums, for it was very publicly discovered that the three Blairings were skipping four whole days of school between them so as to complete their Seychelles vacation. Not only that, but Mr John McIntosh, the head of the Oratory School which the Blair boys attend, seemed to cast doubt on whether Tony and Cherie had notified the school of the impending absence. He seemed quite put out, and was quoted, reminding the world, "I say to parents they must observe the three Hs - haircuts, holidays and homework."

Does he really say such silly things? As the old gag goes, most kids could observe homework all day - but what is it with the haircut fetish? Perhaps Mr McIntosh stuffs cushions for the deprived with the locks of the fortunate, who are selected to attend his school. But I doubt it. Not for the first time, I suspect, Mr Blair will be wishing that he'd sent his sons to one those nice discreet public schools where the head doesn't talk like Captain

Mainwaring. Anyway, No 10 has since made it clear that Cherie, *elle-même*, wrote a note to the Oratory yonks ago, giving notice of the upcoming Seychelles adventure.

What messed it up for the Blair's is that - as they disported themselves on the Seychelles (sorry, did I say, "Seychelles" again?) - the Secretary of State for Education, David Blunkett, let it be known that he was actively considering legislation to prevent parents from taking their children out of school for trips abroad and suchlike.

Mr Blunkett was responding to worries expressed by David Hart, the head of the Heads Union, and therefore, educationally, the *capo di tutti capi*.

Alas, as soon as the Blair/Seychelles/term-time holiday scandal broke, this alliance between government and educationalists fell apart. Mr Hart accused the Prime Minister of not setting "a good example" (yes, he really did. Unbelievable, isn't it?). Our old friend, Nigel "Giggles" de Gruchy, General secretary of the NAS/UWT, thought it was a good example - but only of "why politicians should keep their mouths shut and not lecture other parents". He went on, "They try to tell teachers how to run schools and end up being embarrassed themselves." We all know, don't we, whose job Mr de Gruchy thinks it is to lecture parents and to run schools. It's his.

What is interesting for me in this case (besides the unintentional comedy) is that the issue behind it lies slap on the fault line between my warring communitarian and libertarian inclinations. In other words, what should

requested to, making a huge, messy model of a bloody Egyptian *shaduf*, while simultaneously attempting to explain to my daughter the principles of balance and leverage.

I do all this partly because I can see what the social consequences would be if I didn't. But in one respect I too am a sinner. Like Tony Blair, I will take the kids out of school for the odd day or two in order to go on holiday. Our household is also one where both parents work full time, in jobs whose rhythms are not determined by the changing of the seasons. Finding a clear period when neither of us is working is increasingly difficult. But the times and durations of school holidays in Britain were set when there was still a harvest to be brought in, mother was still at home, the patterns of people's lives were roughly similar, and money - not time - was at a premium.

Attitudes were different then, too. I seem to feel a greater need to spend whatever time I do have with the children than my own father did (catch him struggling with a *shaduf*). So I have not, until now, felt guilty about taking the kids out of school, if necessary. Quite the opposite. My children won't miss out because we will ensure that they read, write, divide and - all else failing - catch up, before going back to school.

Besides, families like mine are not the problem. In London's Tower Hamlets, a generation of young Bengalis are having their education jeopardised by, among other things, returning to Bangladesh for long, term-time holidays. These kids are disadvantaged

QUOTE OF THE DAY
"This obsession with being happy is one of the curses of Western civilisation."
Glenda Jackson, politician and former actress

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY
"The public weal requires that men should betray, and lie, and massacre."
Michel de Montaigne, French essayist

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MONITOR
ALL THE NEWS OF THE WORLD
European press verdicts on the launch of the euro

TODAY, 11 currencies disappear from screens as trading in euros begins. Gone are the powerful Deutschmark, the solid Dutch guilder, the often shaky Italian lira. And gone is the Irish pound. Should we regret it? Anti-euro campaigners see a badge of independence. History says otherwise. Our currency could never be truly independent. It had to be tied to one of the giants. When anti-euro campaigners call Irish entry "undemocratic", they are talking nonsense. We voted for it when we endorsed the Maastricht Treaty. We chose the fate of our currency, and staked the future of our economy, by democratic decision.

THE EURO'S dream start must not lull us into a false sense of security. In contrast to the old D-Mark, the new currency has yet to establish the necessary trust, particularly in the awareness of German citizens remain sceptical. The euro is the project of political elites, and not of the corner grocer, the craftsman or the pensioners.

There is barely another area of the gulf between politicians and voters appears so wide. *Sueddeutsche Zeitung, Germany*

THE INTRODUCTION of the euro is a revolution, an unprecedented voluntary surrender of national sovereignty. We owe monetary union to the vision and the determination of our leaders and central bankers. They have given us back some faith in politics. *De Standard, Belgium*

It's not even going to solve the problems of the European Union's social coherence. Furthermore, it will not constitute a panacea for the Greek economy's problems. Let's leave the other Europeans to celebrate joining the euro and let us take care in the two years to come to reinforce our economy, to make our businesses more competitive and to emphasise social cohesion. *Eleftherotipia, Greece*

THE COMMON currency will not solve the problems of the international financial crisis or the misery of the third world.

PANDORA

WHAT NEXT for Charlie Whelan after the Chancellor's spin doctor put his head on the block yesterday? It is well known that Whelan has a passion for football and, it is said, would love to get involved with the Football Association. Conveniently, the FA is currently in upheaval after the resignations of chief executive Graham Kelly and chairman Keith Wiseman. One Blairite was suggested to Pandora yesterday that, if Whelan were to become the FA's chief, why shouldn't Gordon Brown's other top adviser, the aptly-named Ed Balls, accompany him – as the new FA chairman?

THE LID appears to have come off Transport Minister Glenda Jackson's long-murmured campaign to be Mayor of London. Her battle to win her own party's nomination, followed by the votes of her fellow Londoners, began in earnest in yesterday's *Daily Mail* with a full page profile of the MP for Hampstead and Highgate. Not long ago, the *Mail*'s sister publication at Associated Newspapers, the *Evening Standard*, gave Glenda a rather poor "electability rating" as mayoral candidate, but yesterday she was said to "have achieved a great deal" and to be in "no mood to ease up on herself". Of the Mayor's office, Glenda was quoted as saying: "It's a job I would love to do, but we'll have to wait and see if anyone wants me to do it". A source close to Glenda told Pandora yesterday that the race was "all a question of timing: the successful candidate will be playing a long game".

PANDORA WAS surprised to hear Andrew Marr, the political columnist, on Radio 4's *Today* programme exclaim, regarding the launch of the new European single-currency: "Britain has butted out." Hailing the birth of the euro as "the most important political and economic event since the falling of the Berlin Wall", Marr moaned: "Sadly, we have not been in there shaping this for our own national interests." However, Pandora's colleagues on this newspaper recall Marr taking a very different line in the past – including the period when he was editor of *The Independent*. "So what should decent, patriotic, but pro-European politicians do?" he wrote in December, 1996. "The first thing is, to create time and space for serious

thought about the options facing us." More recently, in April 1997, Marr wrote that: "Major has been proven right, first in negotiating the single-currency opt-out, and second in sticking by his official line of 'negotiate, then decide'." Aren't these exactly the policies that the Government is taking, which Marr calls "butting out"?

PANDORA HAS a suggestion for England's batters as they face Australian spinner Shane Warne today in their bid to score 183 runs for victory. The Aussie player happens to be rather sensitive about his weight. At the opening of his own sports café in Melbourne earlier this year, when journalists questioned him about the fact that he seemed a bit hefty, Warne visibly lost his composure. In view of the fact that it was the Australians who invented the art of "sledging" – that is, vocally abusing their opponents – surely it would be fair dues if the England team were to toss a few choice remarks at Mr Warne.

WHICH MODERN American artist produced the largest body of religious art? Andy Warhol (pictured), according to Jane Daggett Dillenberger, an art historian, left behind more than 100 "sacred" works, most of them daubed in the months leading up to his death, 12 years ago. In her new book, *The Religious Art of Andy Warhol*, Dillenberger reproduces previously unseen works, such as the painter's 30ft-long version of *Da Vinci's The Last Supper*, in which Christ and his disciples are accompanied by motorbikes, and another in which the holy feast is punctuated by the logo of a popular US brand of potato crisps.

FANS OF Hollywood action films have been dreaming about this meeting for years, but when Jean Claude Van Damme came face to face with Steven Seagal for the first time, no bone-crushing kung fu kicks were launched – not a single karate blow struck in anger. In fact, the meeting took place on the Caribbean island of St Bart's last weekend, aboard the 188ft yacht belonging to producer Keith Barish, and, according to all reports, the two rival celluloid gladiators "got along fine". What a publicists' nightmare!



Crude, violent – but quite brilliant



TERENCE BLACKER

Watching an unforgettable 'South Park', I realised it had some undeniably disgusting moments

FOR MANY years, it has been an established fact of national life that anyone who has edited the humorous magazine *Punch* will himself lose his sense of humour. It was Malcolm Muggeridge, a former *Punch* editor, who first identified this phenomenon in his essay "Tread softly for you tread on my jokes" and subsequently exemplified it by becoming a grouchy, marginal figure forever grizzling on about the amount of sex people were having and how all he longed for was the day when he would meet his Maker.

To judge by recent pronouncements, David Thomas, the man who presided over the death throes of *Punch* in 1992 (it was later revived as the *Flyed house magazine*), is no exception to the rule. This weekend, he excitedly seized upon a warning sent to parents of children at a minor public school in Cambridgeshire about the moral dangers of the hit record "Chocolate Salty Balls" by Chief and of *South Park*, the television programme from which it was taken. Here was yet another case, Thomas argued, of TV producers peddling filth to the young. It was all part of the dangerous downward

spiral to which drugged-up, ignorant teenagers, divorced one-parent families and cynical trends in the media were contributing. Something was going – altogether now – "terribly, terribly wrong".

There's a danger of over-reaction here. Thomas's sermon appeared in one of those middle-class tabloids in which the honest, solid values of decent, God-fearing folk are

portrayed as being under siege from the forces of disorder and permissiveness. As is traditional on these occasions, the writer was photographed with his lovely young family, looking protective and concerned at the threat of Chief and his appalling chocolate salty balls.

Yet I found myself taking it personally. As it happens, I spent much of Christmas dinner discussing with my 15-year-old niece our favourite moments from one of the most unforgettable *South Park* episodes, "Mr Hankey, the Christmas Poo". There will be those who might argue that teenagers should be discouraged from watching a cartoon story in which a small, apparently dysfunctional, Jewish boy with something of a faecal hang-up is locked away in a mental home, only to be vindicated when his fantasy figure Mr Hankey (a festive turd) not only turns out to be real but also unites the parents at *South Park* School. However, as we enjoyed the episode on video later that afternoon, it seemed to me that, though brilliantly satirising parental anxiety, psychiatry and political correctness, it also had some

undeniably disgusting moments – my niece was showing encouragingly good taste. After all, she could have been watching the bleary, sozzled sentimentality of *Men Behaving Badly* or even the smug, clever-dick sanctimoniousness of *Have I Got News For You*?

It is, I suppose, the incipient violence of programmes such as *South Park* that some people disapprove of. They point in particular to a running gag, repeated in almost every episode, involving the regular and ever-varying demise of a small, pathetic character called Kenny (who was spared, in a nice seasonal touch, for the Mr Hankey episode). Doubtless the same viewers are inexplicably shocked by the regular, absurdly over-the-top violence contained in another classic of modern television, *Bottom*.

What makes all this genuinely puzzling is the fact that, in feature films, torture and death have not only become acceptable to audiences but, without the release of the cartoonish idiosyncrasy contained in *South Park* or *Bottom*, are presented as witty, ironic, cool parts of the entertainment. When I first saw

Reservoir Dogs, some members of the audience actually whooped with delight with every new shooting and evisceration. And while, three years later, I laughed along with everyone else at the scene in *Pulp Fiction* when John Travolta accidentally (and with hilarious consequences) blows out the brains of a passenger in a taxi, it occurred to me that something sinister and depressing had happened. In the past, violence had played a part in many of the great films – *A Clockwork Orange*, *Apocalypse Now*, *Blue Velvet* and so on – but now it was due for a cynical, knowing laugh, a cheap thrill.

Anyone who doubts the dangers of this trend might consider the case of the celebrity thug Vinnie Jones, a footballing hard man who has exploited a reputation for brutality on and off the pitch to become a screen idol – specialising, of course, in violence. A real person, and role model for young football fans, becomes the toast of the town while headteachers and former *Punch* editors fret about a well written and morally serious cartoon. It would make excellent material for a future episode of *South Park*.

Why should taxpayers prop up our inefficient farmers?

SEAN RICKARD
The logic is inescapable. In order for some farms to expand, it is necessary for other farms to fold

IS THE European Common Agricultural Policy, the notorious CAP on its way out? Our agriculture minister, Nick Brown, has called a summit of British farmers, food industry leaders, consumer groups and environmentalists in London next week to discuss some very radical changes. This will be followed up in March by a meeting of all the EU's farm ministers, who, it is expected, will demolish a major pillar of the CAP, namely, farm price support. By the Spring, governments should have agreed to reforms that will force European grain and beef farmers to operate in future at world prices. This will mark a historic shift that will affect us all.

This move will be welcomed by consumers and food processors. Less welcome – I suspect I part company with many farmers and their representatives – is the farmers' demand that they receive compensation for price cuts, and that public funds must be substituted for reduced price support. By holding prices above market-determined levels, the CAP has produced surpluses – disposal has become a major burden on public funds.

Farmers are demanding compensation for the costs taxpayers have had to incur to protect high prices. To be fair, the European Commission has proposed that there should be ceilings placed on the total payments received by an individual farmer. In Europe, this is known as "modulation", and is sensible. But British farmers are fighting fiercely to prevent any change.

Farmers are concerned about the impact on their incomes. It is hardly surprising. Reform is being driven by a rapidly changing world: increasingly the freeing-up of world trade is bearing down on agriculture. Farming, like all other industries, has to come to terms with the in-

creasing competitive pressures involved in these changes. It must recognise that income subsidies are not only a misuse of taxpayers' funds but are eventually self-defeating, as they breed inefficiency and a reduced ability to compete.

The more exposed farmers are to world markets, the greater the need for economic stability in their production costs. That is, rather than the roller-coaster ride of the last 20 years, farmers desperately need currency stability, low inflation and low interest rates. In fact, they need the UK to join EMU sooner rather than later. We can but hope that as the UK prepares for membership of EMU, the world's financial markets are restrained from causing the pound to fluctuate widely between the euro and dollar.

Farmers, and their representatives, see incomes as the key influence on the number and size distribution of farms.

But there are more powerful forces at work. The farming industry, just like any other industry, is driven by two fundamental forces: technology; and knowledge. Over a

period of time these forces combine to replace labour with capital and also steadily to increase the economically viable size of farm enterprises. Once this is recognised, it follows that policies designed to arrest the decline in the number of farms will compromise the industry's potential competitiveness.

Over the coming years technology will raise yields; it will encourage further substitution of capital for labour and will continue to increase the economically viable size of production. Farms that are efficiently managed and have the scale and enterprise to invest to meet changing conditions face a more promising outlook than is represented by the "static" picture of taking last year's fall in farm incomes as a measure of the industry's prospects.

Once the issue of reform is viewed from an industry perspective the question of individual farm size is thrown into relief. Some 75 per cent of UK agricultural production comes from just 25 per cent of farms. These are our efficient farms; they are, in practice, the farming industry. Smaller-scale farms should be no more a concern than small businesses in other sectors of the economy. If incomes are low because these farms are too small to be viable, that is a social, not an industry issue. The numbers of smaller farms have been steadily declining for many years; the CAP has slowed the rate of decline for these farms but it has proved unable to halt the technology-driven trend towards larger, more capital-intensive farms.

The logic is inescapable. In order for some farms to expand, it is also necessary for others to fold.

This process of creative destruction is not unique to farming; it is at the heart of economic development and rising living standards. The harsh truth is that an industry



Rolling farmland can still make good returns David Hughes

will never have the incentive to strive for more efficient, cheaper methods of production if its entrepreneurs are guaranteed a living by the state. If all farms, large and small, demand and receive compensation the cost to the taxpayers will be enormous and the end result must be attempts by the EU to slow down the pace of reform.

This raises a paradox for the UK farming industry. Its larger-scale producers are highly efficient and hence potentially highly competitive. Yet they can fully exploit this advantage only if the pace of reform quickens. World markets, despite last year's setback in Asia, are developing rapidly, and in order to gain reasonable shares of these fast-growing markets, the EU must speed up the pace of reform.

Far from aiding competitiveness, government subsidies remove incentives to be efficient. In the case of larger farms, who do not need the subsidy, these payments are channelled into land and asset purchases, which increases the cost base. Providing smaller-scale farms

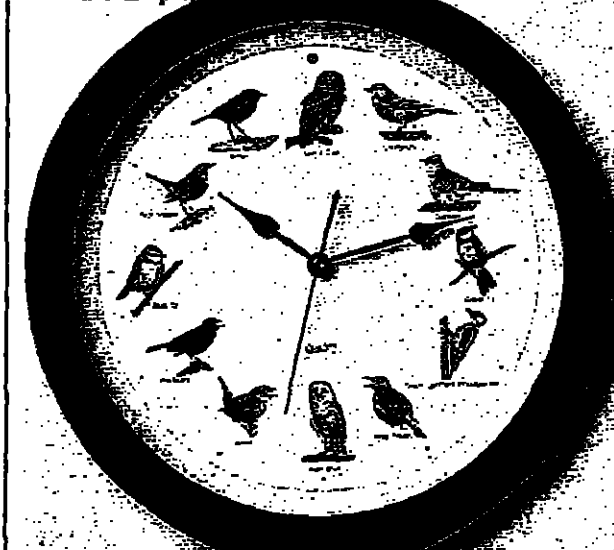
with full compensation will not improve their ability to compete but it will slow down their rate of exit from the industry. Many of these smaller scale farms are "managed" by a farmer who, in the vast majority of cases, will be leaving the industry over the next 10 years. Only a small proportion will be succeeded by their children. Full compensation for such farms may be justified as a social payment but it should not be used as an excuse for providing full compensation to larger farms.

Confusing social issues with production has blighted British and European farming alike for decades. Soon, though, the European Union may do the unthinkable and allow the industry to compete with world markets. Uncomfortable – for the inefficient – it will be, but this is the only real security for future generations of farmers.

The author is a former chief economist for the National Farmers Union; he is now director of the executive MBA at Cranfield School of Management

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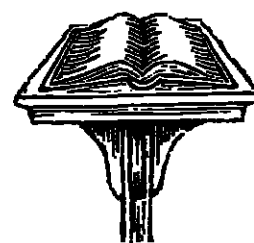
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The dangers of English chauvinism



PODIUM

DICK NEWBY
From the Wainwright lecture by the Liberal Democrat peer to his party's Yorkshire and Humberside Conference

THE UNITED Kingdom is embarking on a constitutional revolution. Virtually every aspect of how we govern ourselves is being changed, in some cases fundamentally. And yet, there is a sense that the Government, lacking as it does a logical blueprint for reform, has embarked on a constitutional journey which has all the hallmarks of a mystery tour, to a destination unknown.

The effect of the constitutional changes in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and London will inevitably increase their political bargaining power with Westminster. They will lobby hard to retain or increase the proportion of tax revenues which they enjoy. The consequence for the English regions is that – without the political clout which regional government would give – they will lose out.

If we accept that there is a strong case for regional government in the English regions, what form should it take, what powers should it have, and how should it fit in with other, existing levels of government?

We must begin by accepting

that the UK's Constitution, even when reformed, will owe more to Heath Robinson than to a Jefferson or Hamilton.

This Government has no coherent vision for a reformed constitution. It is almost proud of the fact. And, in a sense, it is merely following a long British tradition of patch-and-mend pragmatism rather than logical or theoretical blueprints. If we accept a rolling programme of English regional government as part of the patchwork quilt which forms the British constitution, what would regional government in England look like?

The initial powers for regional assemblies would, I suggest, have many similarities with those of the Welsh Assembly, without the powers to make secondary legislation. They would have responsibility for health, education, housing, planning, transport, economic development, sport and the arts. This list immediately raises the question of the region's relationship with local government. There is a potential danger of conflict between the two, particularly if the Government proceeds to enable local authorities to have pow-

erful elected mayors – and recent polling evidence gives strong support to this proposal. But I see the role of the region essentially to be to set out a regional strategy in the policy areas for which it is responsible, and to take over from the unelected and barely accountable regional offices of government departments the responsibility for ensuring that government expenditure is used to best effect. This would

permit greater flexibility to respond to regional needs.

A regional assembly would of course be elected, and there are the usual compelling arguments for doing this by STV (single transferable vote) in multi-member constituencies. Should the assembly have tax-raising powers? The arguments for doing so are very strong. Tax-raising power is at the heart of all political power and, if regional assemblies really are going to have some degree of independence from Whitehall, an ability to raise at least part of their revenue directly has great appeal. The range of taxes which could be deployed sensibly at regional level is, however, quite limited.

The Scottish Parliament will be up and running in six months' time. Belatedly, English parliamentarians are scurrying round trying to agree the response. The Conservatives are half proposing a separate English Parliament which would mirror the Scottish Parliament. I would strongly oppose a new English Parliament. It would run the risk of becoming a depository of chauvinistic English nationalism of the worst kind.

Equally, I do not believe that it will be acceptable to English MPs – or Lords – to have Scottish participation in debates and votes on English (or English and Welsh) legislation. The resolution of this problem is, I believe, to be found using the model which Liberal Democrats use. Each debate at conference is either a federal or an English debate. When it is a Federal debate everyone can participate. In an English debate, only English representatives can. The same procedure should be adopted at Westminster.

How do we achieve regional government? It will not come without a struggle. This Government is not committed to it, and the Tories are opposed.

Some commentators are coming round. Jeremy Paxman, in his book on the English, concludes: "New nationalism is less likely to be based on flags and anthems. It is modest, individualistic, ironic, concerned with cities and regions as with counties and countries. In an age of decaying nation states it might be the nationalism of the future." But then, Jeremy Paxman is a Yorkshireman!

The slow burn of the euro



HAMISH MCRAE

Money is the strangest of commodities. Sometimes it moves fast; other times, with glacial slowness

IT IS hard, on this occasion, not to agree with Charlie Whelan.

The soon-to-depart press secretary of the Chancellor said yesterday that it "could not be right" that his own activities should attract more press attention than the launch of the euro. In 25 years' time the brief Whitehall career of a press officer will hardly warrant a footnote in the history of politics in the UK - it will get the footnote only if it becomes an early sign of the unravelling of what appeared to be a promising government.

The euro, on the other hand, will be a major feature in the history books for generations to come. At one extreme, children may be learning that the year 1999 was a key date in the creation of the United States of Europe, just as 1776 was a key date in the creation of the United States of America. At the other extreme, they may learn that this was the equivalent of the Treaty of Versailles in 1919, a botched political decision that helped to push Europe along a slide to catastrophe.

Or maybe (and this is my own expectation) they will learn that it was an interesting monetary experiment, like the Bretton Woods fixed exchange rate system of 1944, that worked for a while reasonably well - and then fell to bits after lasting less than a generation.

Yesterday everyone involved with the euro was congratulating each other at its smooth launch. In fact there were only two things that might have gone wrong. One was some kind of technical failure as a result of loading a new currency on to the computers of the world's banks. It didn't, which is unsurprising when you consider the considerable technical competence of big banks. They are terrific at the actual mechanics of banking - it is lending billions to Russia (or whoever) that they screw up.

The second was the possibility of some kind of speculative attack. For example, the irrevocable locking-together of European currencies might encourage holders of one (say the Italian lira) to bail out and pile into another (say the German mark) on the grounds that the locking together might not be so irrevocable after all. But the fact that this, too, failed to happen is also unsur-



A Parisian artist joins in yesterday's celebratory parade in the French capital to mark the smooth launch of the euro

Pascal Pasani/AFP

prising, for there is no reason why it should happen now as opposed to in a year or two.

Money is the strangest of commodities. Sometimes it moves with astonishing speed: currency rates change, interest rates change, stock-market prices soar and plunge, giant projects are financed, countries default on their debts. All this can happen in a few minutes, occasionally in a few seconds.

At other times it moves with glacial slowness. Those of us who were taught our economics in the Sixties were told that currencies were fixed together and also fixed to gold. That was the world system, a global agreement that had underwritten the post-war recovery by giving international traders the currency stability that they needed to plan production, trade and so on. This was in contrast to the bad old days of the inter-war period when currencies floated, countries devalued to obtain a competitive advantage, protectionism rose and trade collapsed.

Tensions within this system were evident almost immediately, for sterling was over-valued and had to be devalued in 1949. Strains increased during the Sixties and the system finally fell to bits in 1972. But

the key lesson is that it took years for those pressures, which were evident at the start, to break through. Political will can resist financial forces for a long time.

So it is terribly important now to ignore both the hype and the hatred: that the euro project is bound to be a success because it has started so smoothly, or that it is bound to fail because the people at the European Central Bank are incompetent.

Both views are wrong. Even if it runs smoothly for many months, even years, that does not ensure its survival. However, even if it were managed moderately incompetently, it could still last for years. The economies of developed countries are pretty robust animals: you can throw quite a lot of incompetence at them and they still manage to survive. Look at the way they scrambled through the collapse of the fixed rate system and the great inflation of the Seventies and Eighties.

So what should we think? Leave aside for the moment the contentious issue of whether Britain should join, which is really a separate decision involving sovereignty as well as finance and economics. What we should try to do is to see this venture in a long historical con-

text and then - in the months and years ahead - look for clues as to how the advantages it confers and the tensions within it will play out.

The euro represents a powerful unifying force in an area that has not had a single currency for some 1,500 years - not since the Roman empire. The fact that the money is the same on different sides of a border inevitably binds the economies on each side more closely together. So the continental European economy will inevitably become more closely integrated as the years go by.

This inevitability stems from (sorry about the expression) price and wage transparency - the fact that both companies and individuals will be able to see the differences in wages and prices in different parts of the Continent. Sure, at the moment anyone with a calculator can work this out pretty fast, but not having to work it out at all really does change things.

How will transparency affect Europe? Well, of course we have no folk memory of the Roman empire, but we can look back at the early Fifties here, before the surge of international trade changed our lives. Things we bought were made here: if you wanted a car or a TV set you bought a British one because

that was the only sort available. Now it is impossible to buy either.

But not all services are similarly traded. We still have bank accounts, mostly in British banks. So continental Europe will be faced with a wave of cross-border trade not just in goods but also in services. Companies that are uncompetitive (like our car makers) will gradually disappear. Companies that are good will tend to take over. The single European market will make another leap forward, and though there will be winners and losers the overall efficiency of the European economy will undoubtedly rise as a result.

This will create tensions. To take another analogy, look at our local high streets. Stand in Inverness and you see the same stores as you do in Plymouth. That homogeneity has not yet happened on the Continent, but it will. Will Europeans feel comfortable about the practical aspects of economic integration, in particular the fact that local companies may fall as outsiders come in?

People will move more, too, as individuals can compare wages more directly and companies can more easily scour a larger market for talented staff. Again, the overall economic effect will be for more

efficiency, but will continental Europeans feel comfortable about the migration that will result - "their" people losing jobs to outsiders?

I suspect that in the early years of the euro, these practical tensions will prove more difficult to contain than the more abstruse concerns about an interest rate being set by a committee in Frankfurt, rather than by a local central bank or finance ministry. Look 10 or more years forward and the pressure could become enormous. But if euroland does get through the next three years and succeed in exchanging all the marks, francs, lire and so on for euros, then do not expect the thing to break up swiftly thereafter.

Money is only money. People do adapt surprisingly fast to having a different kind of the stuff in their pockets and their bank accounts. We have, after all, had to adapt to the fact that our money now is worth less than 10 per cent of what it was worth 30 years ago. That is a much bigger adjustment than the shift from one currency to another.

So what happens in the next few weeks is no guide, positive or negative, to the future. Beware the euro-euphoria. Beware, too, the euro-sneers.

RIGHT OF REPLY

HILARY WAINWRIGHT



The editor of 'Red Pepper' replies to David Aaronovitch's article on splits in the Government

DAVID AARONOVITCH is wrong to assume that plotting and jostling for position are all that we'll see in the aftermath of Peter Mandelson's resignation, and that Tony Blair's charisma will win through.

Prescott's efforts to exploit a mood of disaffection with New Labour point to deeper political forces than he or other cabinet ministers can control. MPs, councillors, party members and trade unionists generally have gained a moral confidence to speak out where before they suffered in silent anxiety.

This stems not only from Mandelson's fall but also from what his aspirations (and the Prime Minister's extravagant sympathy towards them) reveal about New Labour. Mandelson's desire to live in swankyland, a desire so strong that all his renowned acumen was thrown to the wind, is a striking metaphor for New Labour. With his half-million-pound house, Mandelson is saying: "Look, I'm one of you: I'm a Labour minister without any hang-ups about associating with the filthy rich - in fact I prefer them to people who live dirt cheap." Meanwhile, the Government's policies are saying to the rich: "You're all right with us."

Charlie Whelan's efforts to make the Chancellor look like an all-year Father Christmas have provided a camouflage. But low renewals of party membership (even in Sedgefield, I hear) and opinion polls in Scotland and Wales, are signs that the camouflage is wearing thin. The Prescott-Brown alliance may be evoking the mantra of "traditional values" to advance its own position, and also provide cover for a government whose moral character is in question with its own supporters. But the sounds they give off as they jostle encourage more radical pressures for change.

A place of secrets and wives

TUESDAY BOOK

THE COUNTRY OF MARRIAGE
BY ANTHONY GIARDINA, FLAMINGO, £11.99



IT'S NOT all jam being a man these days. Pilloried in the media for our risible shortcomings, we can't even respond by being strong and silent. Strong and silent gets you no points any more. Sensitive and articulate is the thing - not our forte. But there is a consolation: for the first time, it is interesting to be a man (to men, at any rate). Being a man is now a profitable literary theme. Just ask Nick Hornby.

Anthony Giardina's *The Country of Marriage* is a collection of stories offering the American take on this theme. The cover bears the headline (or mumbleline, perhaps) "the emotional silences of the married man". My reaction was to groan inwardly, and I imagine the reaction of most British readers would be the same. But we

would be wrong. This is not some fictional equivalent of *Men from Mars*, *Women from Venus*. These stories offer no lists of things to do to improve your marriage overnight. They simply describe what being inside a marriage is like, with elegant and often painful accuracy.

There is considerable variation. Some stories are told in the first person, some in the third. One is narrat-

ed by a woman. "The Second Act" imagines how Scott and Zelda's Fitzgerald's marriage would have gone on if he had not died in 1940. "The Films of Richard Egan" charts Egan's disappointing career and sees in it a symbol of lost dreams - the inevitable fading of that sense of "specialness" we have as children.

Despite the variations, the nine stories share a strong family resemblance. All are written in the same icy, skilful prose. The same themes emerge: the secrets that even (especially) the most intimate marriages are full of the acute (but futile) understanding of misunderstanding. Giardina's men are self-aware but paralysed. They smoke cigarettes and look at the stars after their wives have gone to bed. They know precisely what's going wrong but can't lift a finger to change it.

His prose is full of insights that will make men nod in rueful recognition. In place of the usual "My wife doesn't understand me", he has "She was quite certain she could see right through me... [but] what she was seeing was only the mirror of herself: what such behaviour, if she were doing it, would certainly mean."

Sometimes, there is understanding, but it leads only to the tiniest change. The longest and most representative story is "The Secret Life". A man goes on an unsatisfactory camping weekend with his wife and daughter. His secret is that he is having an affair; but this is not the real secret. The real secret is that he has never really met his wife at the deepest level - "The

large and fulsome emotional life she lived had not been his" - and it is this secret that she penetrates during the weekend.

She understands at last that she is alone; she resolves that she will stop asking for what she will never get. It is this "awful adjustment" that, paradoxically, will allow them to stay together. Both understand this without a word being spoken.

In the end, these stories offer a small, cold hope. Marriage is a perilous place but its perils can be known and accepted, unlike those of the world outside it. Marriage is a refuge, a "bubble". To stay in it, scrupulous understanding and a continuing stoicism are needed.

Compare this with recent British fiction on the subject of masculinity. We are not comfortable with such heroic seriousness. We prefer a more jokey, blokey, okay-dokay approach. Take Robert Llewellyn's *The Man on Platform 5* (Hodder, £14.99): a role-reversed version of *Pygmalion* in which two half-sisters, Gresham and Eupheme, make a wager when they spot a train-spotter at Milton Keynes station. Eupheme has seven weeks to transform this car-coated, video-recorder-carrying nerd into an attractive man that Gresham will fancy. It's a novel about surfaces - do they reflect, or affect what's underneath?

I'm normally suspicious of novels by celebrity comedians (Llewellyn was Krynlen in *Red Dwarf*) but this one has plenty of good points. The dialogue is first-rate - particularly that of Ian Ringfold, the train-spotter. Yes, indeedly-doodly. Blimey O'Reilly. Ringfold comes to life so sympathetically that I not only believe in his existence, I'd like to meet him. And the plot, after taking us on a breathless ride, gives us a nice soft landing.

This is an optimistic novel that proclaims there's hope for men yet. It's an enjoyable entertainment, but

Llewellyn does not go as deep as Giardina, and doesn't really try to. There is some seriousness here, but it has to be seriously sweetened with comedy to be acceptable to the British palate. Giardina's uncomfortable truths don't slip down quite so easily; but they offer more food for thought, especially if you're a man - or a woman.

BRANDON ROBshaw

TUESDAY POEM

HEDGEHOG
BY JO SHAPCOTT

The road is slick
in the rain
and good slugs
can be nuzzled
out of shadows
under hedgerows.

I understand.

It's plain
you can't hurry across
even when those other lights
come at you,
preceding
the hurtling mountain.

Our poems this week come from volumes shortlisted for this year's TS Eliot Prize, to be announced on 11 January. Shortlisted authors will read at the Almeida Theatre, London N.1 on Sunday 10 January (box office: 0171-359 4404). Jo Shapcott's 'My Life Asleep' is published by OUP (£6.99).

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The long haul: Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald

Corbis

Jerry Quarry

JERRY QUARRY lived for the moment, in the boxing ring and out. Sadly, his life style aged him before his time, and his demise was drawn out. Before his decline set in with horrible finality in the 1990s, he wrote what should be his epitaph: "I've been in the ring with the best of all men / I gave my all, round after round / And the world knows I tried / I fought with heart / But needed much more / A bridesmaid but never a bride..."

At his peak, as a top-class heavyweight in the late 1960s and early 1970s, Quarry fought Muhammad Ali twice and fought for two versions of the world championship against Jimmy Ellis and Joe Frazier.

He boxed in Britain twice, knocking out the British heavyweight champion Jack Bodell in 64 seconds at Wembley in November 1971, and the following year outpointing his fellow American Larry Middleton.

When he fought Bodell, the notoriously unorthodox Derbyshire southpaw, pre-fight speculation hinged on how long it would take Quarry to solve the style of a man who had just trounced Joe Bugner over 15 rounds. "Did you find him awkward?" said an eager journalist in the dressing room inquest. "Well," said Quarry. "He sure fell awkward..." He also twice defeated the British heavyweight Brian London in California, in 1967 and 1969.

After a 200-fight amateur career in California, Quarry turned professional just before his 20th birthday, in 1965. He was unbeaten in his opening 21 contests, and the former heavyweight champion Rocky Marciano went to see his 22nd, at the Olympic Auditorium in Los Angeles, with a view to taking over as his manager. Marciano was disappointed, however, and left before the end as Quarry was outboxed by Eddie Machen, a veteran contender known as "The Old Professor".

When Muhammad Ali had his boxing licence withdrawn in 1967 for refusing to be drafted into the Vietnam War, the World Boxing Association organised an elimination tournament to decide a new champion. Quarry reached the final, by outpointing Floyd Patterson and then stopping the respected and hard-hitting Thad Spencer in the 12th round. However, he reserved one of his worst performances for the final, a dreary 15-round war on points by the negative, counter-punching Jimmy Ellis from Ali's home city of Louisville, Kentucky.

By 1969, Quarry's hard left hooking had brought him back into contention and he was matched with Joe

chilling knockout suffered by his younger brother Mike in the previous bout. Mike was knocked unconscious for 10 minutes by the world light-heavyweight champion Bob Foster, and there were, initially at least, serious fears for his health. "I watched it on the monitor in the dressing room and it totally destroyed everything I wanted to do. I thought he had killed my brother."

Quarry enjoyed a revival in 1973 when he outpointed Ron Lyle, a former long-term convict from Denver, and knocked out the thunderous punching Earnie Shavers in one round. He was close to a shot at the winner of the Ali-George Foreman fight in Zaire, but instead fought Fra-

and beer. He once looked back at his tough upbringing and said: "I've led a *Grapes of Wrath* life..." He had been articulate and fresh-faced in his youth, with a passion for poetry, and had said he wanted to move into boxing commentating when he retired from the ring. Instead, he lost the estimated \$2.1m he had earned from boxing as his life hit a downward spiral of divorce, drug and alcohol abuse, and a sad refusal to accept that his youth had gone.

"Would I do it all over again?" he said in 1990. "When I started in 1965, I was changing Greyhound Bus tyres for a living, bringing home \$99.50 a week. You damned well know I'd go back into boxing. Yes, sir!"

He was surely declining mentally when he fought for the last time, in a six-round club fight in Colorado in 1992, when he could no longer get a licence in California. He absorbed a pounding from a novice named Ron Cranmer. His purse was a fraction above \$1,000, but the legacy was terrible.

By 1995 he was in the care of his elder brother James and was officially suffering from severe pugilistic dementia. James set up the Jerry Quarry Foundation, a non-profit charity to assist disabled former boxers who need more help than is provided by the social services. Quarry was frequently confused and had difficulties carrying out simple tasks like shaving or tying shoe laces. "Jerry has 60 per cent short-term memory loss and the temperament of a 12-year-old," said his brother.

Quarry was taken into hospital with pneumonia last week in Templeton, California, and died following a heart attack.

BOB MEK

Jerry Quarry, boxer: born 15 May 1945; three times married (three children); died Templeton, California 3 January 1999.



Quarry's 1972 rematch against Muhammad Ali (left) ended in seven rounds

'Would I do it all over again?' he said in 1990. 'When I started in 1965, I was changing Greyhound Bus tyres for a living. You damned well know I'd go back into boxing. Yes, sir!'

Frazier, who was recognised as champion in New York and several other American states. Quarry was pulled out on the advice of the doctor at the end of round seven. "They never thought I had a heart till that fight," he remembered. "Damned shame I had to show 'em that way."

His most famous night was in Atlanta, Georgia, in October 1970, when he was the "fall-guy" for Ali's comeback from his three-year exile. Quarry was stopped because of a badly cut eye in the third round. It brought him his biggest payday, \$338,000.

A rematch with Ali two years later ended in seven rounds, with Quarry admitting afterwards his concentration was deeply affected by a

zies again in Madison Square Garden in New York, and was beaten in five rounds. The old champ Joe Louis refereed - and many felt he let it go on too long.

Quarry retired in 1975, following a defeat by Ken Norton, and worked as a bodyguard for the pop group Three Dog Night, returned with a win in 1977 and retired again for six years. The first fears for his health were voiced at this time by Californian doctors, who felt he showed the initial signs of brain damage. After his second fight of 1983, he needed 62 stitches in a gruesome network of cuts, yet he won. "It was fun, but that's enough," he said. The Californian Commission agreed.

He took to selling mobile homes

Ruth Clifford



"Then it was my turn to cry!"

Hulton Getty

THE SAD thing about a career like Ruth Clifford's, which began at the dawn of the feature film, is that most of the films that made her reputation have been lost.

She was born in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, in 1900. As a child, she loved the early movies and she and her brother - allowed to go on Saturdays - would sit through the programmes twice. She was particularly impressed by the Biograph films, directed by D.W. Griffith. "In those days," she told a researcher, Susan McConachy, "they didn't have names for the people - Mae Marsh, Lillian Gish - but we made up names for them. Later on, I had the privilege of working with Mae Marsh and we became very close friends."

Her mother died when Ruth was 11, and she and her sister were placed in St Mary's Seminary on Narragansett Bay. At 15, Ruth and her sister moved to California to live with an aunt who had been a stage actress. She made her debut at the old Edison company, as an extra. She visited the Universal company, was quickly hired by Henry MacRae and by 1917 had risen to become one of their most valuable leading ladies, playing opposite some of the most popular leading men of the time.

The studio survived on its westerns; it employed authentic cowboys who found pictures paid better than ranching. Clifford was taught riding and shooting by these men - experiences which came in useful years later when she worked with John

Ford on films like *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon*, *Wagonmaster* and *The Searchers*. (Ford liked her because she played bridge.)

At Universal, she became the favourite actress of the director Rupert Julian - who later directed the Lon Chaney version of *The Phantom of the Opera* (1925). "I worked with him for two years. He wouldn't let me work with any other director, which was considered a privilege." Julian - real name Percival Hayes - came from New Zealand. "He was very dignified and looked extremely severe. He wore a stunning little moustache, and was always beautifully groomed."

Oddly enough, he prided himself on his resemblance to the Kaiser. Julian directed Clifford in her most notorious film, *The Kaiser, the Beast of Berlin* (1918), with himself in the lead. Audiences became so worked up they threw things at the screen and when a German soldier - about to rape Clifford - is strangled, huge cheers went up. The picture's success brought Universal back from the brink of bankruptcy.

In 1919, while most of the East Coast studios were packing up and moving west, Clifford went in the opposite direction, and made pictures in New York for Charles Frohman and for David O. Selznick's father Lewis. Locations for *The Peak of Gold* were shot in Puerto Rico.

In 1923, she played in a Graustark story, Jerome Storm's *Truett King*,

opposite John Gilbert, soon to be the most romantic star of his generation. "My favourite leading man," she said. "We were working together and playing love scenes. I enjoyed kissing him but when he took me out I wouldn't let him kiss me goodnight! Isn't that silly? I guess I was a strange kid..."

One of her finest roles fortunately still survives - albeit in only one American archive. Clarence Brown, later responsible for some of Garbo's best pictures like *Flesh and the Devil* (1926) and *Anna Karenina* (1935), directed *Butterfly* in 1924. Clifford played Hilary Collier, who sacrifices her own career for the musical education of her talented young sister (Laura La Plante).

Silent film actresses have an unfair reputation for overacting in emotional scenes; Brown taught her never to go too far. "Do not cry," he advised her. "The audience will think it's self-pity. Keep a stone in your throat - swallow hard - but don't shed a tear." Hilary is deeply in love with an older man. When her sister bursts into the kitchen to tell her that he has proposed to her, Ruth Clifford responds with great stillness - and the scene is profoundly moving.

At the opening night party, Brown confessed to her that he had tried hard to cast the role with a more famous star, but was glad he hadn't.

"Then it was my turn to cry!" she said. "When you're young and haven't had experience in life, you

depend on a good director - and an inspiration like that."

A more celebrated production came out the same year - *Abraham Lincoln*, Clifford's favourite of all her films. It was the pipe-dream of two youngsters who wanted to break into pictures with a bang. Al and Ray Rockett hired the great Frances Marion to write the script and Phil Rosen to direct. Alas, only two reels survive, and while the picture looks impressive, Clifford's role of Ann Rutledge is cut to the bone. The film won critical plaudits, but like so many high-minded Hollywood productions it was a financial flop.

In 1924, Clifford married James Cornelius, a real-estate agent who would develop much of Beverly Hills. They took a cruise to Hawaii for their honeymoon.

"Fortunately, marriage has proved beneficial to my career," Ruth told a journalist in 1925, "though, if it hadn't, the career could go hang itself." She turned down an offer to do a picture with Valentino because she and her husband had planned a fishing trip to their second home at June Lake. "I took my work too seriously, because I had so little else. I never had any fun. I didn't know how." Her marriage, she said, changed all that. And to her surprise, her fan mail increased. She and Cornelius had one son, James Cornelius Jr.

Although her mother came from Manchester, Ruth Clifford was proud of her Irish background and, when

an Abbey Players tour reached Los Angeles, she became a member of the company. Her career continued into television - she played in many episodes of *Highway Patrol* in the 1950s. On the screen, she worked with Spencer Tracy in Ford's *The Last Hurrah* (1958), with Gregory Peck in *The Keys of the Kingdom* (1944) and *The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit* (1956).

In the Seventies she was appearing in commercials - some for British television. In the late 1980s, she appeared in a documentary on Irish cinema and Irish stars for Ulster TV, *A Seat among the Stars*. She lived in Sherman Oaks outside Los Angeles until 1987, when she moved to the Motion Picture Home in Woodland Hills where she died.

"She was a remarkable person," said her friend the film historian Anthony Slide. "She disliked being interviewed. Sit her at dinner and she would regale you with stories, but put a tape recorder in front of her and she would clam up. Yet she enjoyed life so much - and was never stuck in the past. She was very well off and even in her nineties she loved to go on cruises to places like Hawaii, dancing into the small hours."

KEVIN BROWNLOW

Ruth Clifford, actress: born Pawtucket, Rhode Island 17 February 1900; married 1924 James Cornelius (one son deceased); died Woodland Hills, California 30 November 1998.

Diana Mulgan

FOR MORE than quarter of a century Diana Mulgan sought, nurtured and developed talented singers, presenting them to increasingly eager audiences both in Britain and abroad. Among her charges were such household names as the soprano Karita Mattila, the mezzo-soprano Anne Sofie von Otter and the baritone Olaf Bär.

But it was also in the politics of the classical music world that Diana Mulgan became a force to be reckoned with. In 1980, at the age of 32 she, along with her colleague Robert Rattray, bought the classical musicians' agency they were working for, Lies Askonas Ltd.

Twelve years later she stunned both Rattray and the entire musical profession by jumping ship - together with her partner Tom Graham, who was then a singers' manager at the Harrison Parrott agency - to join the big multinational entertainers' management company, International Management Group (IMG). The couple took with them more than 100 singers, leaving their respective former agencies to almost start all over again. As the journalist Norman Le-

brecht noted in his 1996 book on the destiny of the classical music profession, *When the Music Stops*, "between them, the pair managed some of the sweetest voices in Europe".

But that one extraordinary professional move aside - which six years later remains a highly sensitive subject in the industry - Diana Mulgan is remembered for her enormous energy, her ability to sniff out talent and her great attention to artists' needs.

Born in 1948, to a father who was a professional oboist and conductor, Mulgan played the violin with the highly regarded Leicestershire Schools Symphony Orchestra and was an accomplished pianist. She studied German at Nottingham University, although to hear her speak the language in the office was hilarious as, while nevertheless getting her point across, she destroyed just about every rule of grammar that the Teutonic race had ever devised.

Mulgan began her career in 1972 as a general dogsbody and factotum for a matriarchal musicians' manager called Lies Askonas. A Viennese-born fencing mistress who had served on General Eisenhower's

staff during the Normandy landings, Askonas had since 1953 built up a high-profile roster of singers and conductors, including Birgit Nilsson, Hans Hotter, Zubin Mehta and Claudio Abbado from little more than a broom cupboard, opposite a Soho brothel. But within a matter of months Mulgan was unceremoniously fired from her administration duties due to the frequency with which correspondence turned up in the wrong files.

This off-related demotion gave Mulgan the opportunity to develop relationships with the firm's artists. While the agency's representation of such great names might sometimes have only been for the maestro's annual token appearance in Britain, the doors such friendships opened were very important. Throughout her career Mulgan was never slow to capitalise on her musical contacts across the world.

Askonas took the pretty, vivacious and ambitious Diana Mulgan under her wing, ensuring the young protégée witnessed at first hand conductors such as Istvan Kertesz or Carlo Maria Giulini with the Philharmonia and legendary singers

such as Teresa Berganza and Nicolai Cydeda. The older woman also took an interest in Mulgan's personal welfare, lending Diana her home in Minorca from time to time.

Askonas, who died in 1996, sold the company to Mulgan and Robert Rattray in 1980. In that pre-fax, pre-desktop-computer age the pair of them devoted huge amounts of energy to making it a highly respected international force in an industry which then at least was as much paternal as managerial. Her devotion to duty saw Mulgan spend many Saturdays catching up on the book-keeping and on more than one occasion she prepared a lavish feast for singers and conductors from a poky little cloakroom at the back of the office.

Although Mulgan could lay her hands on any piece of paper that was needed, her desk remained a complete mystery to those who worked with her; but for her real work was out on the road spotting talent, encouraging performers and witnessing live concerts.

To the dismay of her colleagues Mulgan returned from the first Walther Gruener Lieder Competition

in London salivating over the vocal talents of the winner, a 23-year-old baritone from Dresden - then a city behind the Iron Curtain - who would require much looking after and for whom visas and travel documents would be a constant and expensive nightmare. But that singer, Olaf Bär, is today one of the most sought-after vocalists of his generation and withers in two years of his competition success had contracts with the Royal Opera, Covent Garden, La Scala in Milan, and EMI Records.

Mulgan wouldn't just spend time with the big names. No matter how much or how little income an artist produced for the agency, if Mulgan believed in a performer she would welcome the musician at the airport, proffer some ego-massaging before the performance, and celebrate a hard-won ovation with her clients late into the night.

She also had a respected intellectual capacity and came to realise that audiences, particularly on such hallowed turf as the Wigmore Hall in London, demanded more than merely to hear and see a traditional recital. And so, with the help and backing of the hall's director William

Lynne, Mulgan developed the Insight Series, a string of concerts where audiences were first taught about the poetry within Lieder before hearing the Lieder itself.

The early 1990s saw enormous changes in the way classical musicians were managed in the United Kingdom. While one high-profile company went into liquidation, others amalgamated or altered the way they operated. IMG, famous for the high fees and total management packages it commanded for its clients, and already prominent in New York, took the opportunity to launch into the European classical music market from its established sports offices in London. Big-name artists and bigger-name managers defected - with Mulgan and Tom Graham being among the most prominent of the latter.

As the dust settled on the ensuing uproar, Mulgan continued to put enormous energy into the business, rounding off a full day at the office with a concert or opera performance followed by a reception or party before the whole cycle began again just a few hours later.

In what little free time she en-



Sensationally jumped ship

joyed, Diana Mulgan loved the great outdoors and in 1980 completed the coast-to-coast footpath from Bees Head in Cumbria to Ravenscar in North Yorkshire.

She was diagnosed with cancer in 1995 and almost immediately after that devastating news she and her long-term partner Tom Graham were married.

TIM BULLAMORE

Diana Mulgan, classical musicians' manager: born 6 April 1948; married 1995 Tom Graham; died London 18 December 1998.

Rolf Liebermann

THE COMPOSER Rolf Liebermann was one of the most influential figures of the post-war musical scene, especially of opera, along with such luminaries as Walter Legge, Herbert von Karajan and Sir Rudolf Bing, all of whom he outlived. It was as an opera administrator that he was best known, at the Hamburg Opera 1959-72, and as director of the Paris Opéra from 1973 to 1980.

Born in Zürich in 1910, Liebermann studied law at that university and music at the José Berr Conservatory, and went on to study composition in Budapest and Vienna under Hermann Scherchen, to whom he became secretary and assistant in 1937-38. Scherchen was one of the foremost advocates of contemporary music and had conducted the premieres of many 20th-century masterpieces from Schönberg's *Pierrot Lunaire* to works of Berg, Webern, Dallapiccola and Henze, and he remained a major influence and friend of Liebermann until his death in 1986.

In 1938 Liebermann returned to Switzerland to become a music critic and at the same time studied serial 12-tone technique with Wilfried Vogel. Being Jewish he kept out of Nazi-dominated countries until after the Second World War, but a strong anti-Nazi message runs through the stage works he wrote then and later.

He became a producer for Swiss radio in 1945 (until 1950) and for the Beromünster Radio Orchestra (until 1967), often working with other German radio stations while composing for the stage and concert hall. An eclectic with a daring technique that incorporated jazz and popular musical elements with erudite new musical techniques, Liebermann was considered a leader among post-war composers, but had already proved himself to be an administrator of great competence and imagination.

When the Hamburg Opera - which, like other German musical institutions, had been allowed to start again under the strict control of the occupying powers - was looking for a general manager, he was the ideal candidate. As he pointed out in his autobiography *Operräume* (1977), one thing the candidate had to be was Jewish.

Liebermann took on Hamburg in 1957 and made it not only the European centre of excellence in musical

standards, but the main venue for new operatic works. He promoted the early careers of Plácido Domingo and Mirella Freni among many others. His repertoire balanced modern and traditional works, reviving forgotten composers and giving specialist conductors a chance to perform their individual enthusiasms. During this time he virtually stopped composing. His most successful work was the 1954 *Concerto for Jazz Band and Orchestra*, which quickly acquired international notoriety and helped to create his reputation as an *enfant terrible* whose dignified and authoritative presence covered a deep vein of playful naughtiness. No modern administrator has been able as easily as Liebermann to do exactly what he wanted, however controversial, with so little opposition.

His principal operas, *Lenore 40/45* (first performed in Basel in 1952), *Penelope* (Salzburg 1954) and *The School for Wives* (Louisville, Kentucky 1955), were well received, but after doing the round of German opera houses, had few revivals. The reason was that Liebermann never diluted the energy he put into his current occupation, and without new output a career languishes. He knew he could return to composition whenever he wanted, but the attractions of being at the centre of the musical world were too seductive to be laid aside, even temporarily.

In 1973 he was invited by President Pompidou to take over and reform the Paris Opéra which had fallen on bad



A dignified and authoritative presence hiding a deep vein of playful naughtiness

the best artists, whatever their background or nationality.

He employed new producers, some like Joseph Losey from the cinema, others from theatres and opera houses in Germany, Britain, Italy and elsewhere. He widened the repertoire as he had done in Hamburg, where he had introduced Pendereck, Krenek, Britten, Berg and Janacek, but now with more traditional works, superbly well done.

less prominently than in Hamburg. His pioneering spirit has survived him. Hugues Gall, in charge of the two leading state opera houses in Paris, was previously part of his team.

As a composer Liebermann well merits a revival. His varied style would be enjoyed by both traditionally minded and progressive audiences. He wrote superbly for the voice, and in his few late works the music is closer to tonal models and *bel canto* than earlier. One of his last major compositions, *La Forêt* (1987), has a libretto by his wife, Hélène Vidal; another, *Cosmopolitan* (1988), is scored for jazz singers and symphony orchestra.

Rolf Liebermann was a Berliozian character, daring and with a giant vision. Aside from his music, his historical reputation may be similar to Diaghilev's, who was an inspirer of others. In addition to *Operräume* and his French version, *Actes et Entretiens* (1976), still unpublished in Britain, he made a sumptuous album of the productions of his Paris years.

JOHN CALDER
Rolf Liebermann, composer and administrator: born Zürich 14 September 1910; married Hélène Vidal; died Paris 3 January 1999.

times with a poor administration, low musical standards and a culture of constant strikes. At that time Covent Garden and the ENO between them offered a wide and adventurous repertoire at affordable prices. Liebermann took London as his model and imposed a benevolent but firm hand on the Parisian anarchy, retiring musicians and chorus members who should have been pensioned years earlier, and engaging

When attacked by Pierre Boulez for his new-found conservatism, he recruited him to conduct the world premiere of the complete three-act *Lulu*, which had just been made possible by the death of Alban Berg's widow, who had blocked it all her life. He persuaded Olivier Messiaen, the renowned religious composer and teacher of the French avant-garde, including Boulez, to write an opera in his final years. *St François d'Assise*, a long, daringly conceived portrait, had little dramatic action but much musical originality; at one point the angel of music descends from heaven to demonstrate what the music of heaven sounds like.

Under Liebermann unequalled performances of *Otello*, *Parsifal*, *Don Giovanni* and *Boris Godunov* were given, but at great expense to the state. Some were filmed and he contended that the future of opera depended partly on finance from film versions; in this he was prophetic.

His most successful work, the 1954 *Concerto for Jazz Band and Orchestra*, established him as an enfant terrible

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Theodore Newhouse

THEODORE NEWHOUSE, who with his two brothers assembled one of America's biggest communications conglomerates, began a lifelong career in publishing as a manager of a family-owned newspaper, *The Long Island Press*. By the time he retired some seven decades later, the family holdings included 26 newspapers; Condé Nast Publications, which publishes *The New Yorker*, *Vogue* and *Vanity Fair*; substantial interests in cable television; and Random House publishers.

Newhouse was one of eight children from a family of poor Jewish immigrants who came to the United States at the turn of the century: his father was Russian; his mother Austrian. As a child in Bayonne, New Jersey, he helped the family by selling newspapers and scrounging for firewood.

His eldest brother, Samuel I. Newhouse, got the family into the publishing business when a local lawyer-businessman gave him a try-out at no wages. In 1911, at the age of 16, Sam was put in charge of *The Staten Island Advance*, a newspaper that the lawyer had taken over in satisfaction of a bad debt. Sam made the paper a success and acquired it himself in 1922.

Theodore Newhouse, then 18, was brought in to help out and get what he would later call "on-the-job training", which included duties as the paper's music critic and overseeing the publication's classified advertisements. A third brother, Norman, was also recruited, and moonlighted as a reporter. Together, the brothers established a management style that came to characterise the Newhouse empire - frugal, secretive, and controlled only by members of the family. Nor were they sentimental - when *The Staten Island Advance* became unprofitable a few years ago, it was quickly shut down.

The brothers embarked on a policy of newspaper acquisitions, amassing the fourth largest newspaper empire in the United States, that includes the *Newark Star-Ledger*, the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, the *Portland Oregonian* and the *New Orleans Times-Picayune*.

In 1932, Newhouse became general manager of a new acquisition, *The Long Island Press*, and soon

after became the associate publisher of all the Newhouse newspaper holdings, an involvement he sustained until 12 years ago when his health began to fail.

Newhouse moved into a nursing home and the company is now divided into two parts, the glossy magazine holdings run by Sam Newhouse's son S.I. "Si" Newhouse and the more profitable newspaper and television holdings by Si's brother, Donald.

The founding Newhouse brothers established both a punishing work ethic (at work before dawn) and an abstemious life style (they used public transport); however, they also devised a series of tax feints and dodges to keep the revenue services perplexed. After Sam Newhouse's death in 1979, his heirs, Si and Don, filed a return the following year declaring the taxable estate to be \$91m, on which \$49m tax was owed. The IRS determined it worth \$962m and the tax \$558m, the highest tax bill in history. Moreover, the IRS charged that the original return was so far off base as to constitute fraud and imposed a 50 per cent penalty of \$305m on top. A jury found in favour of the family.

Throughout his life, Theodore Newhouse maintained a strong interest in the arts. While he was working at the family's first newspapers, he took night classes at several New York City universities in opera, music and art, and studied dance in the summers. In later life, he made donations to a wide variety of cultural groups, including the New York City Opera.

Theodore Newhouse never lost sight of the fact that it was his elder brother who got the empire started. In the mid-1970s, the family gathered at his summer home in Connecticut to celebrate his 20th wedding anniversary. As the lunch progressed, Theodore rose to give the first toast and heads turned expectantly towards his wife, Caroline. But Theodore raised his glass and said simply, "To Sam".

EDWARD HELMORE

Theodore Newhouse, publisher: born Bayonne, New Jersey 19 July 1903; twice married (one daughter deceased); died New York 28 November 1998.

GAZETTE

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

DEATHS

ATHERTON: Vicki, formerly Church, died peacefully on 2 January at Ripon Community Hospital. Dearly beloved wife of David, and much-loved mother of Nicholas, Katherine and Peter. Funeral at St Andrew's Parish Church, Kettleigh, at 1.30pm on Thursday 7 January and afterwards at Newholme Manor, Oakworth. Family request donations instead of flowers to Dr T. Perrin, Breast Cancer Research, with cheques payable to St James's Hospital, Leeds.

BRADY: Bertha Woodall, died on 2 January 1999, aged 84 years. Her funeral service will be held on 14 January at Monkton Combe Church at 2pm. No flowers but donations if desired to United UK or UNA UK may be sent c/o Co-op Funeral Service, Pulteney Road, Bath, telephone 01223 314304.

DEACON: Karen Olga Maria, much-loved wife of John and mother of Timothy, Paul, Christopher and Louise, peacefully at St Mary's Hospital, Chertsey, on 31 December at St Peter's Hospital, Chertsey. Funeral at 4.30pm, Wednesday 6 January, at St Mary's, Oaklands. Family flowers only please.

LEVY: On 4 January 1999, Alfred Jonathan (Jon), MD FRCS, peacefully at home, after a long illness against pancreatic cancer, borne with exceptional courage and dignity, and surrounded by his beloved and loving wife Mary and children David, Sophie, Carla and Rachel. Funeral service at the West London Synagogue, Upper Berkeley Street, London W1, at 1.30pm on Wednesday 6 January, followed by interment at approximately 3pm at Hoop Lane Jewish Cemetery, Golders Green, London NW11. Prayers at home at 8pm the evening of 4 January. There will be no memorial service. No flowers please, but donations may be sent to Dr David Cunningham's Research Fund, Royal Marsden Hospital, Downs Road, Sutton, Surrey SM2 5PT.

Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births, Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Memorial services, Wedding anniversaries, In memoriam) are charged at £6.50 a line (VAT extra).

BIRTHDAYS

King Juan Carlos of Spain, 61; Jean, Grand Duke of Luxembourg, 78; Mr Mansur Ali Khan, Nawab of Patanaid, former Indian cricketer, 58; M Jean-Pierre Aumont, actor, 88; Mr Alfred Brendel, concert pianist, 68; Mrs Jean Clark, former President, National Council of Women of Great Britain, 64; Mr John Darby, former chairman, Ultramar, 69; Mr Terry Davis MP, 61; Mr Robert Duvall, actor, 68; Sir Alan Hume, former Chairman, Ancient Monuments Board, Scotland, 86; Miss Diane Keaton, actress, 53; Lord Kingsdown, former Governor of the Bank of England, Lord-Lieutenant of Kent, 72; Miss Jan Leeming, broadcaster, 57; Miss Sarah Lucas, radio presenter, 48; Mr Maurizio Pollini, pianist, 57; Maj-Gen Henry Quinlan, former Director of the Army Dental Service, 93; General Sir Michael Rose, Adjutant General, 59; General Sir John Stibbon, Chief Royal Engineer, 64.

ANNIVERSARIES

Births: Dr Benjamin Rush, politician, 1746; Jean-Baptiste Say, political economist, 1767; Stephen Decatur, naval commander, 1779; John Burke, genealogist, founder of *Burke's Peerage*, 1787; Kaspar Ett, organist and composer, 1788; Thomas Pringle, poet, 1789; Thomas Creswick, painter, 1811; William Smith Rockstro (Rockstraw), organist and composer, 1823; Khristo Botev, poet and revolutionary, 1848; King Camp Gillette, inventor of the safety-razor, 1855; Sir William Newnam Prior Nicholson, painter and engraver, 1872; Joseph Erlanger, neurophysiologist, 1874; Konrad Adenauer, statesman, 1876; Nikolai Karlovich Medtner, composer, 1880; Humbert Wolfe, poet, 1885; Clifford Grey, actor, writer and lyri-

cist, 1887; Stella Dorothea Gibbons (Mrs Allan Bourne Webb), poet and novelist, 1902; Kathleen Mary Kenyon, archaeologist, 1906; Jack Lovelock, athlete and surgeon, 1910.

Deaths: St Edward the Confessor, 1066; Giambattista Moroni, portrait painter, 1578; Catherine de Medici, Queen of France, 1589; Isaac Reed, Shakespearean scholar and editor, 1807; Sir George Prevost, soldier and statesman, 1816; Sir William Hillary, founder of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution, 1847; Joseph Giliott, steel pen manufacturer, 1873; Anton Mauve, landscape painter, 1888; John Westland Marston, dramatic poet, 1890; Sir Ernest Henry Shackleton, explorer, 1922; John Calvin Coolidge, 30th US President, 1933; Humbert Wolfe, poet, 1940; Amy Johnson (Mollison), aviator, 1941; George Washington Carver, scientist, 1943; Roberto Gerhard, composer, 1970; Brian Alexander Johnston, broadcaster and cricket commentator, 1994.

On this day: Charles the Bold of France was killed by the Swiss at the Battle of Nancy, 1477; an attempt was made on the life of Louis XV of France by Robert-François Damiens, 1757; Britain and Turkey concluded the Treaty of the Dardanelles, 1809; John Thurtell and Joseph Hunt were tried for the murder of fellow-swindler William Weare, Hunt turning King's evidence, 1824; Gilbert and Sullivan's opera *Princess Ida* was first performed, London, 1884; the first demonstration of X-rays was given by Wilhelm Konrad Röntgen, 1896; the National Socialist Party was formed in Munich by Anton Drexler, 1919; the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (Yugoslavia) was established, 1919; in the US, the first woman governor, Mrs Nellie Tayloe Ross, was elected, 1925; King

Alexander of Yugoslavia established himself as a dictator, 1929; FM radio was first demonstrated in the US by Major Edwin H. Armstrong, 1940; Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras I met in Jerusalem, the first meeting between leaders of the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches for over 500 years, 1964; President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing promulgated a law making the use of French compulsory in advertising, instructions on consumer goods, etc, in France, 1976.

Today is Wassail Eve (tonight is Twelfth Night) and the Feast of St Apollinaris, St Convoynon, St Dorotheus the Younger, St Gerlac, St John Nepomucene Neumann, St Simeon Stylites and St Syncretica.

LECTURES

National Gallery: Norman Coody, "New Appearances (i): attributed to the Clarisse Master, *The Virgin and Child*", 1pm. British Museum: Carolyn Perry, "Islamic Ceramics as Inspiration for the Arts and Crafts Movement", 11.30am. Victoria and Albert Museum: Diana Perry Aldrich, "Early Renaissance Sculpture", 2pm. National Portrait Gallery: Margaret Binnie, "Sir Robert Vyner and His Family", 1.10pm.

APPOINTMENTS

Sir Ivan Callan, to be Ambassador to the Sultanate of Oman. Mr Michael John Christie, to be Regional Chairman of the Mental Health Review Tribunal for the North London and East Region. Ms Brigid Mary Kane, to be Regional Chairman of the Mental Health Review Tribunals for the South London and South and West Region.

CHURCH APPOINTMENTS

The Ven Anthony Footitt, Archdeacon of Lynn (Norwich): to be Suffragan Bishop of Lynn. Canon Peter Hullah, Headmaster, Chetham's School of Music, and Honorary Canon of the Cathedral and Collegiate Church of St Mary, St Denys and St George (Manchester): to be Suffragan Bishop of Ramsbury (Salisbury).

The Rev Kathleen Rattle, NSM, Wilford Hill (Southwark): to be NSM Priest-in-Charge, Chichester Christ Church (same diocese). Canon John Bearpark, Vicar, Benham St Margaret and Rural Dean of Ewer-cross (Bradford): to be also Priest-in-Charge, Benham St John the Baptist (same diocese). Canon Carl Gurney, Diocesan Missioner (St Albans): to be Priest-in-Charge, Digswell Team Ministry, and Honorary Canon of St Albans Cathedral (same diocese).

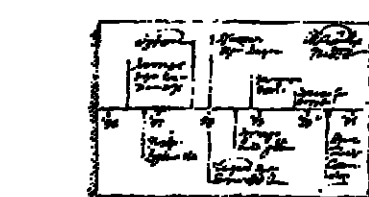
The Rev David Goddard, NSM, Addington (Guildford): to be Assistant Curate, Botley and Lyne and Long Cross (same diocese). The Rev Brian Hall, Vicar, Handsworth (Birmingham): to be also Area Dean of Handsworth (same diocese). The Rev Christopher Hayes, Assistant Curate, Burton Fleming with Pardon, Grindale and Wold Newton (York): to be Priest-in-Charge, Rillington with Scamptown, Wetheringham and Thorpe Bassett (same diocese).

The Rev John Holford, Team Vicar, Shell St Michael and Butcher St Alden (Bradford): to be half-time Priest-in-Charge, Embsay with Eastly (same diocese).

The Rev Brian Leathers, Vicar, Haslemere (Norwich): to be Priest-in-Charge, Stophill Immanuel (Derby). The Rev Robin Martin, with permission to officiate (Leeds): to be NSM Priest-in-Charge, Mansbury (same diocese).

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am; 1st Battalion Welsh Guards mounts the Queen's Guard, at Buckingham Palace, 11.30am, band provided by the Scots Guards.



HISTORICAL NOTES

PETER BERRESFORD ELLIS

Did the ancient Celts really exist?

NEWSPAPERS LOVE "shock-horror!" headlines. But when the *Financial Times* Weekend section came out with a front-page banner "The Celts - it was all just a myth", quoting the opinions of a learned archaeologist in the field, the dismay and bewilderment reverberated through academia and beyond.

Since "Celtic Studies" began at degree level in the 19th century, Celtic scholars have taught, as unquestionable facts, that the Celts emerged at the start of the first millennium BC around the headwaters of the Rhine, the Rhône and the Danube. At their greatest expansion, in the third century BC, they stretched from Ireland in the west to the central plain of what is now Turkey in the east, and as far south as southern Spain and northern Italy down to Ancona.

We know that Celtic armies captured the city of Rome in 390 BC and sacked Delphi in 279 BC. Although partially absorbed or constrained by the Roman Empire and then by the Germanic and Slavic expansions, descendants of the ancient Celts still survive today - the Irish, Manx and Scots, the Welsh, Cornish and Bretons. But only 2.5 million speak a Celtic language.

Starting in the 1970s there has been a second "Celtic revival", the first being at the end of the last century. A veritable industry of Celtomania has been produced, not just in academic studies but with all manner of esoterica. Celtic music has even entered the "pop" charts. Born-again "Druids" come tumbling out of their oak groves, and the surviving Celts themselves have demanded cultural and political autonomy and begun to achieve it. It suddenly became "cool" to be Celtic! Even the Galicians in north-west Spain, who had not spoken a Celtic language in a thousand years, pronounced that they, too, were Celtic.

In 1997 Dr Simon James, writing in the *British Museum's* magazine, attacked the popular misconceptions growing round the subject. Unfortunately his article caused the media to swing the opposite way, causing even the *FT* to emerge with its "shock-horror!" revelation. There is now a new school of historical theorists arguing that the Celts never existed.

What Dr James actually said was: "The ancient Celts are often conceived as one uniform people..." Having set up his own Aunt Sally, that some people thought the ancient

Celts were the "first great nation north of the Alps", Dr James was quite happy demolishing it. As no serious scholar argues such a concept, Dr James could not be censured for dismissing it. But the media, in misinterpreting, created a new problem.

From the commencement of Celtic Studies, the Celts have been identified purely as a linguistic group: a branch of the Indo-European family, like the Germanic Romance, Slavonic, Iranian and other linguistic groups. Celtic is a term used to identify peoples who spoke a particular language which had developed away from its Indo-European parent probably two millennia BC and which had already developed into several dialects by the time they emerged into recorded history. There was certainly no single "Celtic nation" but several Celtic peoples, with a visually brilliant culture, a high-tech one from which the Romans borrowed much - albeit ungraciously. Had the ancient Celts not existed then European culture would have been drastically the poorer.

Peter Berresford Ellis is author of *The Ancient World of the Celts* (Constable, £25)

WORDS

CHRISTOPHER HAWTREE

assistive, adj.

assistiva mulier, a kind of nun. One can only hope that this cumbersome coining does not cross the Atlantic and oust the con-

cise, honest issuing of a hearing-aid. Such shirking of physical fact recalls the unfortunate incident when an Englishman was told by a client that she had an "exceptional" child, upon which he congratulated her. But she looked askance. She had meant that her offspring had a mental affliction.

They're rivals for parental attention, success and even each other's men. It's an impossible relationship. By Maureen Freely

It ain't envy. She's my sister

We're sure Jackie would have loved it." This is what an eavesdropper overheard Hilary du Pré saying at a premiere showing of *Hilary and Jackie*, the film version of her book about her sister. But friends of the real Jacqueline say that's nonsense. She would have taken the film in the vicious spirit in which it was intended. There is little here of the joyous young virtuoso cellist who gave the world so much before being struck down by multiple sclerosis at the age of 28. Instead we see a manipulative sibling whose aim in life is to seduce her sister's husband. The portrait is so twisted, they say, that it should be renamed "Hilary's Revenge".

How could she commit such sacrilege and hope to get away with it? It's one thing to vent venom on your sister when you're still a girl, but a grown woman should at least keep her mouth shut. There's a formula for dealing with intrusive questions. It goes like this:

"Oh, yes. Well. We used to hate each other when we were little. But now, thank God, we're the best of friends." Ask any woman over 21 how she gets on with her sisters, and nine times out of ten that's what she'll tell you. She'll be vague on the details, though. She'll claim not to remember how or why or even when things turned wonderful. She'll say, "It must have been that dreary summer in Galway, when there was no one else to talk to." Or, "I suppose things got easier after I married both sisters off to Spaniards."

Or she'll shrug her shoulders and say it just happened, and then express surprise at your surprise that an 18-year hate-fest could evolve into a mutual fan club without her even noticing. She'll go on to suggest that forgiving a sister for all the horrible things she did to you is a natural and inevitable part of growing up. But don't you believe it. To start liking a sister you once hated is the greatest feat known to womankind. It makes childbirth look easy, not to mention very short.

Even after you have your happy ending, even if your new relationship with your sister is so good that you start remembering the fun times you had together as children, and then conveniently forget, it's still horrifying to count the ways in which the rivalry has crippled you. In my case this was literal. My sister, who is two years younger than me, also happens to be taller than me. And so my jealousy condemned me to decades of stiletto heels and platform shoes. To complete the false impression I was in the habit of buying trousers longer than my legs. This meant that I couldn't just kick my shoes off when I happened to find myself on a shingle beach, or change into trainers to go bowling. So I was always tripping and twisting my ankle.

Even in my late thirties I was still having palpitations at the very suggestion that I consider wearing flat shoes. I was still allergic to tennis and volleyball because she was so good at them, and still suffering flashes of fury at the very mention of the word "Stradivarius", because my parents had given her one when she was 12. I was still getting migraines on the nights before she came to visit, and had not yet bought her a birthday present. My alibi was always the same: every time 2 March came around, I was in bed with a high fever.

I had two children of my own before I made a connection between these fevers and the fever I was running the day my parents brought my sister back from the hospital. My parents didn't want the baby to catch it so they kept me in isolation until I got better. But not before they had proudly displayed their dread bundle and said, "Look! We've bought you a present!" A tactless introduction. But they are not to be blamed for getting my sister and me off to a bad start. As the psychotherapist



JACKIE AND HILARY

As the classical cellist Jacqueline du Pré rose to international fame, her sister Hilary was somewhat eclipsed. Until now, that is. Her biography of Jackie, now a film starring Emily Watson, is causing something of a furore, intense sibling rivalry being the central theme. Jackie is portrayed as a manipulative, arrogant and emotionally dangerous younger sibling. No surprises that Hilary's portrayal of her younger sister may be slightly subjective. Considering that she was overshadowed sexually as well as musically, it seems, how could it be anything else? At one point in the film, Jackie declares that she wants to sleep with Hilary's husband, Kiffer Finzi. After she does just that she's heard saying, "I feel a million dollars this morning - that was exactly what the doctor ordered."



JACKIE AND JOAN COLLINS

Neither seems overjoyed by the other's success in film or books. When Joan became a famous actress, younger sister Jackie decided to try her luck at writing, and carved out a highly profitable career in raunchy blockbusters: "The World is Full of Married Men", "The Stud", and "Hollywood Wives". It's when one sibling steps into the other's territory that the trouble seems to start - as when Joan decided to turn her hand to 'bodice-rippers'. Jackie is rumoured to be less than happy at this sibling invasion. Still, there must have been a moment of furtive glee when poor Joan's literary attempts in "A Ruling Passion" were roundly blasted by Random House, ending up in a court case. The subject of the book? Two sisters vying for control of a small European island, naturally.

Leah Potts once said, most parents don't have the faintest idea how to "help sisters be sisters".

When I think of the awful, awful things I did, I can't understand how my sister ever forgave me. She was not a saint, mind you. She was always stealing my clothes and ruining them, then having the gall to pretend it was nothing to do with her. She often pretended I had hit her, just so that my parents would punish me. But let's put this in perspective. When I was three I filled her pram with dirt, ostensibly so that I could plant a flower on her face. When I was five, I figured out how to cheat at Candyland, and didn't let her win once all summer. I can still remember her bewildered tears, and my smug satisfaction. And the

taller she grew, the greater the pleasure I took in watching her suffer. When I was a very small 12, and my sister a tall 10, I got even by exploiting her weakness for rice puddings. What I did was give her all my pocket money, so that she could double her intake and change before my eyes from a thin and pretty child into a balloon.

According to a friend who has suffered all her life under the thumb of a sister like me, Larkin had it all wrong. "It wasn't my parents who fucked me up," she says. "It was Amanda." It still goes on, even though both women are now grandmothers. They still cannot meet without things getting ugly. My friend will be sitting there, trying to make polite conversation. And Amanda will insinuate herself into the group with



MARGARET DRABBLE AND AS BYATT

These two novelists have elevated sibling rivalry to an art form. Younger sister Drabble's first novel, "A Summer Birdcage", looked at the relationship between two clever, manipulative sisters, whereas Byatt's 1967 novel "The Game" examined the dynamics between, yup, two sisters, one an Oxford don, the other a novelist. Drabble has admitted, "When we were little, we had just an ordinary sibling irritation. Things got worse when we became published writers." Byatt's memory is more acidic. "I devised this technique of hitting her between the eyes on the rare occasions she banged the piano lid on my fingers." Adulthood hasn't softened her instincts. "At the last ditch, I'm sure we'd rush to each other's help," Byatt once said. "But at the first ditch, not necessarily."



ANNA AND JANE CAMPION

"It is rather galling," says the actress-director Anna Campion of the success of her younger sister Jane, director of "The Piano" and "Portrait of a Lady". Jane achieved more than her sister from an early stage, appearing to be a more accomplished actress in school drama, and a better rider and athlete. "It was a real bore for everyone because she would win everything," says Anna. In typical sibling style, Anna followed Jane into film-directing with her flawed debut "Loaded". Anna said of Jane, "I think she wanted it to be good but not mega." Certainly no worries on that score. Anna is philosophical about her sister's superior directing achievements. "I tend to think Jane is six films ahead, and so I just wave goodbye and think I'm on Concorde and she's on the Shuttle."

a simpering smile and take advantage of the first pause in the conversation to say, "Have you been to Highgrove?" When my friend snaps, "No you know I haven't, why are you asking me?" Amanda sighs and says, "Because it's such a pity you've not been asked. It's so lovely..."

Their most recent argument concerned the disposal of their mother's ashes. According to the will, this had to happen at a specific place in the wilds of Scotland. Amanda was having trouble fitting this inconvenient duty into her social whirl, and so she decided that my friend should go on her own. "But it was the way she put it that made my skin crawl. Instead of being honest, and saying she had been invited to Highgrove, she said, 'I think the best

thing would be if you took care of this on your own. You'd be so good at it.' I felt like saying to her, 'Oh yes, I'm sure I will be. I'll bet I'll get a medal!'"

My friend got even with Amanda at a cocktail party a few weeks later. This time, when Amanda asked her the Highgrove Question, as always in front of a lot of very important people, my friend said that she had never been there, and that chances were she never would. "Time is running out, you see. After all, I am 60."

Which should sound like a very mild statement - unless you know that every-one present knew that Amanda was the elder sister and so could not possibly be 52, as she had been pretending for so many years. "I decided the time had come to blow

the whistle on her," my friend told me. The dramas played out by rival sisters are full of such twists - which, of course, is what makes them so addictive and so treacherous. As Elizabeth Fischel points out in her book *Sisters*, the balance of power between sisters is "in constant flux: at times, a relationship of equals, at times, anyone or the other may take control..."

When Kate Millett had a manic episode in 1973, her elder sister tricked her into visiting an asylum and then had her committed. Following another episode in 1980, her younger sister tried to do the same thing. To put all this in perspective, it may be useful to bear in mind that Kate herself once said that half her female lovers reminded her of the older sister, while the other half reminded her of the younger.

What a thought! It's little wonder that so many sisters seek protection from each other by deliberately setting out to be different. Take Gloria Steinem's sister. She's a suburban housewife and mother and she claims she and Gloria get along because neither craves the other's turf. The Milford sisters came to a similar truce - Jessica, you will remember, became a Communist, while Diana married Britain's leading Fascist. Both Margaret Mead and Simone de Beauvoir were able to have happy fruitful relationships with their much younger sisters by "playing mother". But what if your lives and your ambitions are too close? What does Jackie Collins think of Joan? How does Lucy Simon, the other half of the original double act, feel about her sister Carly's solo success, and how does Margaret Drabble really feel about being eclipsed by her sister?

What to make of my friend Susan's dilemma? She has tracked her estranged sister to the intensive care ward of a hospital in Australia. The sister is soon to die unless she has a bone marrow transplant. My friend Susan has offered her sister her bone marrow. But her sister so hates the thought of such a gift from her sister that she has refused it.

Her quarrel with my friend has to do with their mother's estate. Any outsider can see that there's more than enough to go round. But, of course, it's not the money that counts in these things. It's the memory of how your sister made that adorable little face, played that stinking game, and twisted your parents around her little finger to get more than her fair share of love and attention. Elizabeth Fischel calls this problem "limited resources", and you can find it at the core of just about every grievance a sister harbours against her sister.

Take my friend Janine, who was furious when her mother and sister drove 500 miles to see her, only to go into the next room to have a private giggle. How was she to know that they were planning a surprise party? As she said indignantly afterwards, "They should have told me!" It didn't even matter that their intentions were excellent. It still made her wild with anger to see her sister get something she wasn't getting. I know how she feels because once, when my sister, then about 25, woke me up to tell me that I was going to have my coffee black, as she had drunk all the milk, I sprang out of bed and tried to strangle her.

All that's in the past now. When I got divorced 10 years ago and my life fell apart, I sort of lost my authority as elder sister. And so my sister took over. She turned out to be much better at it. She's so kind to me. So wise. So much fun. So generous! I can't believe my good fortune. But it makes sense, too, that we enjoy each other's company as much as we do. After all, we have so much more in common with each other than we do with anyone else. It's been 10 years since we had anything approaching an argument. This is the most stable female friendship I've ever had, and I'm sure it will get even better as we get older.

But if she ever, ever, gets up earlier than me again and drinks all the milk...

What planet are we on?

Continued from page 1

a huge divorce settlement against Mick Jagger (says the *Sunday People*), how Ann Widdecombe and Peter Mandelson, both Librarians, will be transformed "from villains to heroes", and the entire cast of *Friends* (mostly Leos, spooky!) will come unstuck, according to Shelley von Strunckel in *The Sunday Times*.

The *Express* and the *Daily Mail* are currently in the midst of a sooth-sayer battle for readers. The *Mail* offers "Jonathan Cainer's Millennium Countdown" all this week (yesterday Love, today Wealth) and a "Personal Horoscope" special free offer. The *Express* has the sainted Ms Orr's "Four Stars for 1999" running all week, with an eight-page pullout guide in colour. The *Express* offer was flagged, last weekend, by a TV commercial featuring Ms Orr, a grand, duchess-like figure, explaining why she is a good astrologer to a snappish, disembodied telephone voice, presumably *The Express's* abrasive editor Rosie Boycott.

"No it wasn't me," said Boycott, "it's all fiction. But the reason why

we do it is because horoscopes sell papers. At this time of the year we expect to add as many as 80,000 to the sales figures." At what cost of investment? "It's done on newspaper, and it's written by the staff astrologist, so it doesn't cost us much - in the region of £12,000."

Did a sophisticated rationalist like herself believe in star signs? "To an extent. I think horoscopes are good if they can nudge you psychologically towards something you've been half-thinking, and crystallise the thought. It's all about language. The good ones write well."

The language issue is not one that springs to mind. Mscha O'Connor in today's *Daily Star* advises, "Borrow an item instead of buying it and you'll save some much-needed cash"; Gemini Jane in *The Sun* suggests, "It is a great time to renovate or decorate your home."

Justin Toper in *The Mirror*, a man who fatally resembles a Glitter Band roadie circa 1972, goes for a more direct and positive approach - yesterday he promised Leos that "something wonderful is about to

take place" and Scorpios "You are about to enjoy a whole new way of life". But then Mr Toper lives on Paradise Island in the Bahamas, and is entitled to a little euphoria.

A more teasing note is struck by Jonathan Cainer in the *Mail*. "Things have to be different in 1999," he announces boldly. "You already know, I'm sure, the things to which I refer. Why, then, does this send shock waves down your spine? Don't you trust the sky to take care of all your emotional needs?"

Then, perhaps fearing he is being over-deterministic, he writes, "Are you worrying about going from frying-pan to fire?" and we're back with the essence of horoscope writing: blandness, holding steady, walking your own path, playing a strategic game, finding the middle way. The trick is to make the seething neurotic mass of horoscope readers feel congratulated on their indecision, fettered for their selfishness, praised for allowing forces outside themselves to run their lives. No wonder it's been a potent tool with which to quieten the proletariat for 4,000 years.

THE JOYS OF MODERN LIFE

27. ZAPPERS BY OLIVER BENNETT

COULD IT be that things were so much more complicated then? Did we really pull ourselves clean out of our chairs, walk over to the TV set and - risking all kinds of cardiovascular complications - manually press a button to change the channel? I can practically hear the mocking, tinny laughter of the *Smash* robots echoing up from TV Hell.

Thank God for the TV zapper - once an item of unadorned luxury, it now comes with even the lowliest TV set. They have been democratised, and zapping has become a right, not a privilege. How do they work? Who cares? Like butlers, zappers are discreet. And they are reliable: treat your zapper well, feed it the occasional battery, and it will reward you for years. Rarely do zappers go wrong. They are the unsung special agents of home entertainment. Little effort is put into making them look good, for zappers are mere

functionaries. Of course, zappers can be irritating. Like gloves, umbrellas and matchboxes, they are good at getting lost - children are particularly good at finding them obscure new homes. For this reason, households circumscribe a zapper home-turf, usually atop the TV set, while hotels often have them on a handy wire like a telephone receiver - oddly, people like to nick them even though they are nothing without a host TV. Such is their near-erotic allure.

The classic zapper hiding-place is under a sofa cushion. But sometimes they elude us for longer, and we are thrown back into the dark age of manual channel-changing - making us love the zapper even more when it re-emerges.

Zappers have even helped change home entertainment. No longer does the family have to commit itself to one stodgy programme. With zappers, television consumption is a

promiscuous search for instant gratification. And frankly, this model suits the medium much better than the patrician fallacy of "instructive" TV.

Zappers have carved their own special role in small group interaction. Command the zapper, and you are the king of infinite television space. Lose the zapper, and you are at the mercy of the tribe leader. People get over this by taking

turns with it, or throwing it from chair to chair in informal rotas. But as TV watching is increasingly a single person's activity, this is not too great a problem. Zappers have also introduced interesting new body language

variations. Some aim a zapper like a gun, putting their whole bodies behind it. Others have a more quizzical, circular approach. Zappers can even offer a substitute for language: a kind of semaphore. A friend's elderly relative had suffered a stroke, causing chronic dysphasia. Rather than attempt to speak, his emotions were conveyed via zapper-fire - rapid staccato channel changes expressed anger, sprightly hopping showed a lively interest, smooth, considered channel surfing meant that calm reigned.

Zappers are finding new applications daily. Many already have zappers for their stereos; some have them for their curtains. Advocates of "smart" domesticity suggest that households will soon sport a mega-zapper for everything: kettle-boiling, window-opening - possibly even toilet-flushing. But somehow it is the combination of the TV set and zapper that achieves true symbiosis.



I think I'll go and eat worms

John Hegley never seems to be in the frame when there's a prize to be won. In fact, some would hardly class him as a 'poet' at all. All the more reason to make him Poet Laureate. By Judith Palmer

I used to enjoy spitting on little bits of tissue and flicking them at other children much more than I enjoyed poetry," admits John Hegley. "But I always loved having my breath, saying dib dib do, lob dob do, or reciting the Litany: Blessed be God, Blessed be His Holy Name - insistent, relentless language," he surges cataphorically, unleashing this barrage of sibilants as vigorously as gobble of Kleenex from a warrior-scholar's ruler.

"As soon as you call something poetry, you're in trouble. It's alienated from our lives. Maybe the word 'poetry' is a bit worn out," he suggests. "Would people be less snooty if it were called bingo? Or pingo? Poetingo? Lingo? Would it change things?" he demands, the frenzied rhymes ringing through his cobbles on to his saucer. "The Lingo Laureate! Doesn't that sound brilliant?"

Lingo King or Poet Laureate, whatever you choose to call it, William Hill has been offering odds of 14-1 for Hegley to succeed Ted Hughes to the royal butt of sack. An unlikely decision perhaps, but the 45-year-old cabaret poet would be a far from popular choice. Last October BBC audiences voted Hegley's scatological tirade about Miserable Malpas's snally stopped Rotweiler number two in the poll for the nation's favourite comic poem. John Peel sessions, Radio 4 series, *New Night* appearances, a long-running niche in *The Guardian* and a regularly reprinted volume, compounded by years of tireless touring have made Hegley as familiar to the beatings of the public heart as a poet is likely to become.

In Sunday, London's Almeida Theatre plays host to a night of reading by the 10 writers shortlisted for the TSE Eliot Poetry Prize, this year pitting Ted Hughes against an estimable cast including Jo Shapcott, Rith Adel, Jackie Kay and Paul Muldoon. You won't find Hegley among their number, yet ironically, you will find him filling the same Almeida auditorium every other night this week, as he embarks on an ambitious run of solo performances based on his new collection, *Beyond Our Kennel*.

Does it worry Hegley that the world's mainstream poetry consistent fails to pick him to play on their terms?

"I ease to worry," he sighs.

"Dannie Abse once wrote in a journal that my stuff wouldn't endure, and I did then actually go up to him after a reading to show him a poem I thought was one of my best. I don't think he was overly impressed. Fair enough. If he thinks it's not poetry, fair enough. I know I'm making myself vulnerable by saying I want to go round with my poems like this, but there's nothing wrong with being vulnerable, is there?" he asks, with an accusatory yet imploring stare.

Pre-emptively self-deprecatory, on-stage and off, Hegley is an obsessively hard worker and inveterate worrier. Peering out from those Elvis Costello-issue NHS specs, chin jutting, Adam's apple bobbing, he's edgy, anxious, gawky angular inside his skinny dark suits. His

strangers he warned me about/ but without the sweets."

Now a father himself, Hegley finds the memory of this antagonistic relationship still causes flash-points of anger, but *Beyond Our Kennel* (dedicated "for my old dad") finally allows some redemptive healing. The poem "Mything my Father" gently lays to rest the guilt of missing his father's death (nearly 20 years ago), when he unexpectedly finds himself lighting a requiem candle on a recent holiday to Greece.

"I know a lot of what I do is verse," he says, "but here in *Beyond Our Kennel* is the beginning of something more poetic. It is my entrance to the guild" - what was once called the masterpiece - I could submit this, and they can say, 'you can come in', or 'you cannot come in'."

Hegley started as a busker, singing in shopping centres in the late Seventies, accompanying his then girlfriend as she travelled the country working at flea markets. In the early Eighties he hooked up with rival buskers to form The Popticians, then started to make a name at the Comedy Store. "If I do an hour-and-a-half show, there's still easily 20 minutes you could do on a stand-up stage," he says. "But I don't want to just make people laugh all the time; they'd be short-changed. In the last few weeks I've also started writing songs again, and I find they're more close to poems than any of the verse stuff I've ever written. There's more ambiguity."

Ambiguity, though, Hegley believes, can be taken too far. "I feel disenfranchised from a lot of contemporary poetry," he says. "Sometimes the drunken facility helps, but usually I don't understand a word of it... I don't think the people at the Luton Town Supporters Club are going to go for it, but maybe those writers don't care. I like the puzzling aspect of poetry, but I want my work to be understood."

He's unduly defensive. Maybe he shares more points of contact with other poets than he appreciates.

"A man came up to me at a gig recently waving a crossword puzzle," he recalls. "Poet, six letters, H G E. He'd put me, and got the answer wrong. Hegley and Hughes," he laughs. "Who would have thought we met so nearly?"

Beyond Our Kennel is published by Methuen, £8.99. John Hegley is at the Almeida Theatre, London N1, to 9 January (0171-359 4404)



The poet at his unease: 'I know a lot of what I do is verse, but this is the beginning of something more poetic'

Glyn Griffiths

Rocked by the tempest

THE AURN Quartet was born in Cologne long ago as 1981. Although they're well travelled, I can't remember them visiting this country before Saturday, when they gave a concert at the Wigmore Hall with the American pianist Peter Orth Naumburg Competition prizewinner, like our own Stephen Hough.

Last yr Orth and the Aurn Quartet released an impressive CD of Faure's two piano quintets, and they included the second on Saturday. What emerged was how decisively Orth seemed to determine the character of the performance.

He's a veering, even wilful, player, at quickly asserted an expansive way of phrasing in the development of the first movement of Mozart's G minor Piano Quartet. In the Rondo then of the finale he teased out the rhythm slightly by delaying certain notes - just enough to be distinctive, but not so much to seem artificial. It certainly didn't cause disunity with his partners.

In any case Mozart's pianist is not harnessed to the string players quite so tightly as Faure's, and Faure's Second Piano Quintet the possibilities of even screen independence are pretty limited. For much of theme, the pianist is doing pretty well just to play all the notes.

With its arduous Scherzo and, in the her three movements, strge, exploratory modulation there's an element of whimsy - though tempered by stoicism - which produces most unusual and ambiguous emotional climate. Despite a radiant C major

CLASSICAL
AURN QUARTET AND
PETER ORTH
WIGMORE HALL
LONDON

conclusion, which arrives rather sooner than expected (because the finale is so concise), the prevalent emotions are something like sadness and resignation. But one of the many wonderful things about this music is that you can't be sure.

There was nothing uncertain, though, in the assurance and power of Saturday's performance. The musicians sounded as if they had really lived a long time with the music, and the Scherzo was breathtaking. I pitted Orth's hapless page-turner.

Faure was unique in writing two masterpieces for a comparatively rare and rather problematic medium. But probably the best known of all piano quintets is the one by Brahms - although, ironically, he took a long time to decide exactly which instruments he was writing it for.

These players gave the first movement a feeling of deep emotional struggle, dramatising its adventures at some expense of line, so that the total effect was distinctly storm-tossed. I'm not really complaining: the playing was so committed, and the slowly rocking motion of the second movement was most artfully tilted, first by Orth, then by the strings, as if beguiling us into slumber. No holds barred, either, in the Scherzo and final movement.

ADRIAN JACK

Sunshine, happiness and all that stuff

FREDERICK ASHTON'S *La Fille Mal Gardée* is surely the best, most enjoyable full-evening ballet created this century: full of sunshine and happiness. It has everything: a good story about interesting characters, invented by Jean Dauberval in 1789 and enjoyed ever since; it has comedy, love and, just beneath the balletic conventions, a great truth of real life.

John Lanchbery's arrangement and extension of the early scores makes an irresistibly attractive base, and Lanchbery himself is conducting most performances in this revival. Osbert Lancaster's designs, although cramped and makeshift, evoke a wonderful rural setting. And, above all, there is choreography of sheer genius: full of virtuosity, but so lightly done that what you see is always the natural expression of situation and character.

That is why *Fille* is a pleasure to watch, even in a less than ideal performance, and I have to report that standards

DANCE
LA FILLE MAL GARDÉE
ROYAL FESTIVAL HALL
LONDON

have varied a lot over the past week. So many years have elapsed since the Royal Ballet last gave it that almost all the dancers are new to their roles, and perversely the management decided to pitch no fewer than six new casts on stage in only five days.

I watched them all, but some are better passed over in silence, whether through mis-casting, or misconceived or insufficient preparation. Let me concentrate on the best - although the worst also demands comment: Ashley Page's playing of Widow Simone on opening night was dreadful, full of inappropriate facial mugging, poor rhythm in the famous clog dance, and not the slightest touch of femininity anywhere.

The best performance of the heroine, Lisa, who manages to escape her mother's vain pre-

cautions against true love, came from Miyako Yoshida: dancing that was musical and spirited. But she had done it before, in the Birmingham production, so let's single out the youngest of the newcomers, Mara Galeazzi, for the freshness and truth of her debut. Much promise, too, from Belinda Hatley and Sarah Wildor, especially if they will both calm down a little in their acting.

Widow had Bruce Sansom as her elegant, charming lover, Colas. Hatley's Colas was the company's new principal dancer, Carlos Acosta. The strength and smoothness of his dancing were everything we had hoped and expected (although he needs to work on the one-handed lifts); the big surprise was the detail and conviction of his acting.

The most rewarding debut in the other roles was Jonathan Howells as Colas's rich but simple-minded rival, Alain: a notably individual portrait, excellently danced. Alastair Marriott was the best new Simone



Irek Mukhamedov: one Colas among a small host

Bill Cooper

(he and Yoshida brought alive the love between mother and daughter), with Luke Heydon the most hopeful of the others.

At every performance the dancing of the *corps de ballet*, especially the women, had a joyful animation that was a delight

to see. What a pleasure for them to have so much lively dancing to do - and it shows. JOHN PERCIVAL

No chuddies please, we're British

COMEDY

SANJEEV BHASKER
QUEEN ELIZABETH HALL
LONDON

questions: 'Do you eat curry for breakfast? Why do you smell so funny?' In the end, I had to say, 'Look, you're the teacher. You should know'."

School Nativity plays also posed a problem. "No matter what part I auditioned for, I shall give you a rendition of my kindergarten version of Jimmy Porter in *Look Back in Anger*,"

it was always, 'Yes, go and stand with Mohammed and Whangi. You're one of the Three Wise Men'."

Bhasker went on to recall how, when he was young, it was impossible to go to the cinema in a group of fewer than 25 people. "All children under five would then be wound up and made to run up and down the aisle for the entire duration of the film... and not one of them became a bloody athlete."

That's not to say that everything went smoothly for Bhasker. The show seemed

over-long and, often reading from notes, he admitted that some of the material was "work in progress". On many of his songs - he was surrounded on stage by instruments - he showed great musicianship, but neglected to be funny. And was the Queen Elizabeth Hall really the best choice of venue for comedy? Great acoustics, shame about the formality.

Those quibbles aside, it was a pleasingly original evening of stand-up comedy. Technically, Bhasker's is a rather conservative form of observational "do

you remember?" humour. But his comedy of shared experience has a freshness about it, because his particular experience has so rarely been shared before on the circuit.

How often have you seen a comedian sign off with a double-edged gag about Asian stereotypes? "I'd like to say a thank you to the members of my extended family who are here tonight - and to the other three people who got in."

As Bhasker never said: wicked, innit. JAMES RAMPTON

What's the best way to make sense of a cluttered world? If you're Tomoko Takahashi, it's obvious. Sculpt in junk. By Kate Mikhail

Rubbish. Absolute rubbish

Wall-to-wall junk. Well, that's what it looks like. Rusty, broken, yellowed objects strewn in all directions, and in the corner three figures huddled in intense conversation - discussing their plan to bring order to the chaos.

The sculptor Tomoko Takahashi and her helpers have spent weeks gathering this mass of material for the forthcoming Saatchi exhibition, *Neurotic Realism*, and it is going to take a further two weeks to transform the odds and ends into an ambitious, knock-out art installation.

Standing at just over 5ft, Japanese-born Takahashi is dressed for comfort and work. She wears a large red shirt, baggy shorts over thick tights and black, rectangular-framed specs, and has her hair casually tied back. I describe her because you're unlikely to catch a glimpse of her. To say that Takahashi is extremely media shy is an understatement. The artist has consistently refused to have her photograph taken - she wants her art to speak for itself - and in the artists' biographies put together by the gallery she has chosen to be represented by a clock face rather than the usual photographic portrait.

Takahashi breaks away from the group and picks her way across the gallery toward me. "I'm treating this space as a blank, white canvas," she says, before disappearing to unearth a packet of cigarettes and lighter, no easy task in a warehouse gallery that conjures up an image of your local scrap merchant and refuse dump all rolled into one.

Cigarette in hand, she is warm and friendly, her broken English falling out in a rush as she tries to explain the mechanics and thought processes behind the task before her. Somehow, she will bring a satisfying order to the jumble surrounding us. She will tidy up the mayhem, and make sense of it all.

I, too, would like to bring some order to the mind-scrambling clutter of old cookers, radiators and filing cabinets, but my only answer would be to hire half a dozen skips and fill them. Takahashi's approach is a touch more purposeful.

However, it's early days, and Takahashi admits that she still only has a hazy idea of what the end result is going to be. There will be bundles of cables hanging down from the beams and narrow paths weaving through debris attached to the floor, and it will be dimly lit, but any more than that she can't say. "I don't have an aim. It's more like an improvisation. With this type of work, I just gather the things that I like and then I play around with it."

Takahashi, who, conveniently, lives above a junk shop in north London, has always worked with electrical gadgets and office paraphernalia, imposing artistic control



Main picture: Tomoko Takahashi's 'Clockwork at Hales' (1998); below: a photograph of the clock face she has nominated to stand in for her portrait

on an indecipherable mess. One of the hardest things, she says, is simply remembering all the things that are at her disposal.

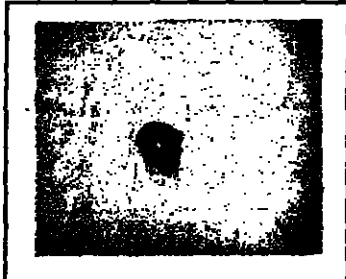
The motley collection of dilapidated computers, domestic appliances and well-used gadgetry is, I was surprised to learn, not just a mass of discarded rubbish. A lot of the things are on loan and have homes to go to, once the exhibition comes to an end. Takahashi likes the idea that the objects have owners and are of value to someone. And by taking them away from their owners, she sees herself as giving them a new lease of life, particularly the electrical equipment, much of which has not been plugged in for years.

As far as Takahashi is concerned, it's all valuable "historical evidence"

which, she says, is "a bit like archaeology", a "lost civilisation" that has, until now, been stashed away in various sheds and cupboards.

Some items were scavenged from skips - a leftover from art school days, when money was short and the use of bricolage a financial necessity - while other pieces were snapped up at car boot sales. And the winner of the 1997 East International award has also recycled two of her earlier installations, *Benzenfeld* and *Clockwork*, both of which are now owned by the Saatchi Gallery. A close inspection reveals that some of the hammers, nails, and even old shop receipts, carry silver tags marking them as Saatchi property.

Just visible under the carpet of tangled wires, old TV sets, electri-



cal gadgets and rusty bits and pieces, lines of black and silver sticky tape sweep out in all directions marking out a basic floor plan. These took five days to map out, but without them, Takahashi says, she could never have got to grips with the huge gallery space. "They gave me a sense of the space, so as I did

it, I got to know how big it was. Now I am very familiar with it and not too scared. It's just guidelines and has made it manageable. The composition itself will go on top, so will ignore these lines."

Tucked to one side, a crumpled-up sleeping bag, surrounded by cartoons of fruit juice and mince pies, marks out Takahashi's sleeping quarters: the artist's total self-immersion in her works means that she often sleeps on site, working through the night and sleeping in the morning. "The night is the best," she says. "The most manic time is after midnight until seven o'clock in the morning." Other tell-tale signs of life dotted around the vast, echoing, 30-by-18-metre gallery include overflowing ashtrays, a half-eaten loaf of

bread, and a miniature pool table.

Takahashi is not one to analyse her own work. "I do not think it's relevant," she explains. "It would be like analysing your birthmark, which I'm not that keen to do." She cannot say who she is influenced by or what her goals are. Instead she works instinctively, only coming to understand her works sometimes months after they are first put together.

"It's all subconscious. I really don't know what I'm doing. I know the direction, like a painter. It's a traditional way of working and takes a lot of control... yes," she erupts with laughter. "I'm the control freak."

Takahashi has described her work as "visual music". "It's quite an abstract collection," she says, "which is why I think of music,

which is quite abstract, and not I'm at the stage when I'm composing."

And there will be music, of sort, which will come from whatever sounds the machines can manage. "Everything will be plugged in and working in some sort of strangeway. It's going to be fun."

And when it's all over? It will be photographed, filmed and drawn the objects will be packed up, sent home, or put in storage, and the gallery will revert to a blank canvas - enough to make even the tidiest of minds cry out for a return to little controlled chaos and confusion.

'Neurotic Realism', at the Saatchi Gallery, 98A Boundary Road, London NW8 (0171-328 8299). 14 January to 4 April

NEXT WEEK

The Shape of Arts to Come

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THE INDEPENDENT COLLECTOR

JOHN WINDSOR'S GUIDE TO COLLECTING CONTEMPORARY ART
THIS WEEK: DAVID PAGE

DAVID PAGE'S witty illuminated plants, up to six feet tall, flourish in the fertile territory between fine art and decorative art. That might sound like an academic point, but it is basic to their appeal - and to their popularity among Brits, who are unsure of their taste but eager to buy art for the home.

Their maximum illumination of only 20 watts classifies them as light sculpture rather than light fittings; they exude a soft glow rather than lighting up the room. And the wire that supports the tissue-paper skin is modelled in much the same way as the armature of a clay sculpture. The difference is that it remains visible.

"They are an extension of drawing," says Page. "I feel I am drawing not with a pencil but with wire." Page, who is 33, studied fine art at the University of East London with the notorious Jake Chapman and Sam Taylor-Wood, whose work lacks Page's homely touch. He says that people often leave his sculptures permanently switched on, so that they are something welcoming to come home to. He also makes illuminated dogs, pigs and cattle.

The plants, some of them like giant, floor-standing leeks from another planet, were inspired by the observation that most house plants soon end up unwatered and dead. "These don't need water,"



he says. "You just plug in for instant greenery."

The semi-transparent tissue is sturdy, hand-made stuff from Tibet - fireproof, of course. The adhesive is wallpaper paste, plus a secret additive.

Two Christmases ago, The Conran Shop in London's Fulham Road commissioned 120 of Page's

light sculptures, including two life-size human figures. Having brought a seasonal golden glow to the shop, they were all sold.

Since then, Page has had three successful shows at the Rebecca Hossack Gallery, in Fitzrovia, central London, and has branched out into illuminated handbags, which can either

be put on the floor or hung on pegs.

The gallery is certainly impressed, saying: "David has broken a tradition of over-precious tissue-and-wire lighting. No home should be without one."

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Andreus Buurman

claims, lest you run into me at the pool and say: "Ha! How could you describe *that* as a decent crawl?" But if you had seen what passed for my version of the crawl before, you would be as astonished by the improvement as I have been.

Put your head in the water, stop trying - and that's it. Can it really be that easy? Apparently so. Shaw's method has some impressive advocates, including the former Olympic swimmer David Wilkie.

Steven Shaw, a trained Alexander teacher and former competitive swimmer, has, together with his wife Limor, also an Alexander teacher, extended the same principle to swimming. Take it easy, and

Now, however, I discover that I was mistaken. My breast stroke is Definitely Not Bad – at least by comparison with some of those who clearly think of themselves as the aquatic bee's knees. And as for the crawl – I hesitate to make any great

Meanwhile, for perfect happiness, all I now need is to learn to dive. I've wanted to dive since I was 10 years old. Thirty years later seems as good a time to learn as any. So, if you see somebody at the pool doing superbly supply somersaults culminating in an oh-so-elegant dive - it is sure to be me.

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Some men go to great lengths to get their pills, then simply don't use them. By David Delvin

S.A.D.?

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Pablo — a thrice-married executive of 43 — begged me to see him. He claimed he had to have Viagra NOW. "You see," he said, "my wife will be ovulating tomorrow. We're desperate to have a child. So I need to take the stuff tonight."

Then there are couples who don't use Viagra because the man's impotence has become "part of the relationship". It sounds like Pseudo's Corner jargon, but any psychiatrist will tell you there are marriages that only function if the husband remains impotent.

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Parents worried about their children's eating habits could now be reassured. By Annabel Ferriman

Fat is an infantile issue

My child doesn't eat! is a common complaint that doctors hear from parents, many of whom worry that their children are abnormally thin. Now, there is a tool that parents can use to judge whether their children really are significantly underweight, or just on the slim side. It also tells them whether their child is obese.

The Child Growth Foundation, a charity set up to publicise the importance of monitoring growth, has published charts, recording the Body Mass Index (BMI) for boys and girls in the UK, showing what is average, what is obese and what is significantly underweight.

While many adults know their own BMI, because they want to discover whether they are thinner or fatter than average, few people know their children's index. And if they do know it, it has not been much use, because there has been no way of comparing it with that of other children of the same age.

Parents have been able only to consult height and weight charts, to see how their children measure up. These charts can be difficult to interpret if your child is in different positions on the two different graphs. If, for example, your son is much taller than most boys (among the top 90 per cent for his age), but about average for his weight, does that indicate that he is not eating enough? Not eating the right things? Or failing to absorb the food properly? Should you take him to see a doctor?

Now such a parent can measure their child's BMI (see box) and see whether he or she is within the range of normality; between, say, the bottom 2 per cent of the population and the top 2 per cent. Tam Fry, honorary chairman of the Child Growth Foundation, thinks the charts will be particularly useful in identifying obesity. "Obesity among children in this country is growing by 6 per cent, every five years," he says.

"It is often possible for doctors to spot the warning signs early on. The usual pattern of development in children is for them to put on a lot of weight in the first nine months, to lose it as they come out of infancy, and then to pick it up again in early or mid-childhood (about the age of six). That is known as adiposity rebound. Research shows that those children who start to pick it up again early (at the age of four or five), are likely to end up obese.

"Our charts enable doctors to spot this early, and warn parents that they should encourage their children to eat more healthily," Mr Fry says.

He thinks that parents are going to have to monitor their children more closely in future, because many health authorities are cutting back on health visitors and school nurses, or insisting that health visitors concentrate on those families most in need of help.

"Cambridge and Huntingdon Health Commission, for example,



Body Mass Index charts will help parents to tell if their children, like Nathan and Max Satin, really are seriously underweight or overweight Neville Elder

has said that they are not going to monitor children's growth after the age of two, which I think is criminal," he says.

"We are trying to find ways of making these charts more parent-friendly, and making them available through the Internet, or through a home computer package. We would like to design a package which could do some of the sums for parents, so that they could work out their children's BMI without too much difficulty."

The new charts were created using data from several UK surveys, covering almost 15,000 children. Dr Tim Cole, senior statistician at the Institute of Child Health, London, who led the team that devised them, thinks they are useful for international comparisons and for tracking trends over time. He also thinks they could be useful diagnostically, alerting professionals if a child's BMI changes suddenly relative to his peers.

"If a child's BMI starts crossing from one centile line to another, either upwards or downwards, it would be useful for doctors to be aware of it," he says.

For example, if a child's BMI had

been going along the 50th centile for several years - which means about half the population is fatter than him and about half thinner - and then fell to the 2nd centile - which means 98 per cent of the population is fatter - it could mean that the child was developing a problem.

A parent who knows what it is to have children of very different shapes is Jill Satin, of Tufnell Park,

north London. Her eight-year-old son, Max, has a BMI of 17.7, which is on the 75th centile for his age - which means that three-quarters of the children of his age are thinner - while her four-year-old son, Nathan, has a BMI of only 13.2, which is on the 2nd centile for his age - meaning that less than 2 per cent of children his age are thinner. "I think these charts could be

useful, as long as they are not used by professionals to make parents feel guilty," says Jill Satin. "I had a health visitor once who asked me whether I knew how to cook when she discovered how light Nathan was. I was insulted because I know a great deal about food and nutrition, and take a great deal of trouble about my children's diets."

"I know that Nathan is very light. Friends pick him up and say that he is lighter than their two-year-olds, but that has always been the case. Both my boys have asthma and see a paediatrician every three months, so they are well monitored."

Not all doctors think that these charts will be useful as a diagnostic tool, however. Dr David Jewell, a GP and consultant senior lecturer in primary health care at Bristol University, says: "You can usually tell if a child is overweight or underweight just by looking at him or her."

"The difficulty is not diagnosing the problem, but knowing what to do about it. If a child is overweight, it is often because the parents are over-feeding him or her, and it is usually difficult to persuade them to do otherwise. Anyone who has tried to lose weight knows

that it involves hunger and denial. Parents usually do not want to see their children go through that. They find it difficult to refuse their children food."

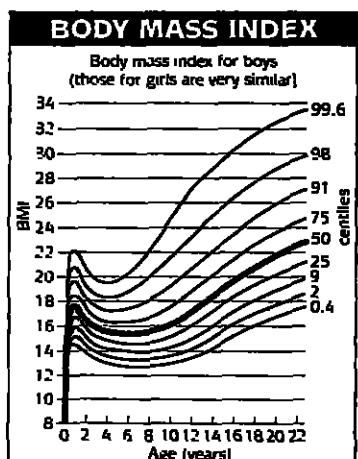
"With children who are thin and eat little, I can usually be reassuring. Some children are naturally thin and they are lucky, because they are never likely to be overweight."

"It is common for children not to eat much, and I encourage parents not to turn it into an issue. Children seem able to live on relatively little food, possibly for evolutionary reasons. When we were hunter-gatherers, children probably had to survive on scraps from about the age of two, when breast-feeding stopped, to about 14 or 15, when they could find their own food."

Dr Jewell admits, however, that such charts could be useful for epidemiological reasons (for plotting population changes), and for parents confused by the fact that their children are in different positions on the height and weight charts.

"You could work out a child's BMI, and then see whether it was within the normal range. If it was, that could be reassuring to parents," he says.

HOW TO WORK OUT BMI



To discover your Body Mass Index, measure your weight and height in kilos and metres then divide your weight by your height squared.

For example, if you weigh 82kg and you are 1.82m tall, the calculation is 82 divided by 1.82 squared (3.31) which comes to 24.77.

For adults, the ideal BMI is between 18.5 and 24.9, between 25 and 29.9 means pre-obesity, and over 30 is obese.

For children, see chart left, between the ages of two and 17, the ideal figures range between about 13 and 27, according to age.

A pain that's hard to stomach

Many women suffering pelvic pain find it hard to get a diagnosis, let alone suitable treatment. By Barbara Rowlands

TRACEY EVERSFIELD, 31, spent an entire day with her back jammed up against her wardrobe, hugging her knees to her chest. It was the only position that gave her relief from the pain that sears through her abdomen for two weeks out of every month, pain so severe she sometimes has difficulty standing.

About 15 per cent of women of reproductive age suffer from pelvic pain. Many are forced to take several days off sick every month; it is estimated that the National Health Service spends around £160m a year on tests, many of them inconclusive, to find the root of the problem.

There is a growing interest in pelvic pain, and although research indicates it may be more common than back pain, there is ignorance on the subject among the public and a general lack of interest in medical circles. GPs often dismiss it as period pain, to be endured.

Chronic pelvic pain is notoriously difficult to diagnose and many women find themselves ping-ponged from one specialist to another with little or no diagnosis, let alone remedy, in sight. Few gynaecologists will counsel a woman on how to deal with her pain.

"The common story you hear is of someone who goes to her GP year after year, before she is taken seriously," says Dr Jane Moore, a gynaecologist and Searle Training Fellow in Pelvic Pain Studies at Oxford's John Radcliffe Hospital.

"Then she has a tale of different diagnoses given to her before, eventually, someone lights on the correct diagnosis and she actually gets some relief."

Over the past eight years, since the birth of her second daughter, Mrs Eversfield has been in and out of hospital, seen six gynaecologists and has had a clutch of diagnoses from endometriosis to an overproduction of progesterone. She has had a laparoscopy - an exploratory operation done under general anaesthetic - and has done the round of hormones, painkillers, anti-inflammatory medication, even Prozac. She is about to undergo special physiotherapy.

"I felt I was being passed about from anyone to anyone," says Mrs Eversfield, who works as a chef. "I could cope with three or four days out of every month, but for two weeks to be taken out of every month, when you've got to go to work and manage your children, is not acceptable. Pelvic pain is very draining. I don't think anyone realises how it can affect you."

Now, Mrs Eversfield attends the only multidisciplinary clinic in Britain for pelvic pain, at Leicester General Hospital, one of a few centres which offer psychological treatment and pain coping strategies, as well as surgery and drug therapy. The pain can severely affect a

woman's life; she may have to take time off work and it can make sex so painful that many women with pelvic pain rarely, if ever, sleep with their partners. "The emotional cost within relationships is severe. Pelvic pain can wreck marriages and doctors in general aren't good at hearing that," says Dr Moore.

Pelvic pain is defined as any pain in the lower abdomen or pelvis that has lasted for six months or longer, and is not linked with menstruation or sexual intercourse. It is difficult to diagnose because it

the most common cause of pelvic pain. Of 100 women with pelvic pain, between 40 and 60 will have endometriosis. A rarer condition is adenomyosis, a form of endometriosis where the lining of the womb invades the muscle itself, bleeding into the uterine muscle.

Then there is irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), which affects one in five young women. One study has shown that half the women referred to a gynaecological clinic for pelvic pain have symptoms of IBS. Adhesions, scarring from infec-

with pelvic pain and their gynaecologists can be miserable affairs. Dr William Stones, a consultant gynaecologist at Southampton General Hospital, has conducted a study of women referred by GPs to gynaecologists for chronic pelvic pain, and found that these considerations were often very negative.

"Women go along not expecting the doctor to achieve much, and conversely the doctor doesn't expect to achieve very much either."

Most women will undergo a laparoscopy, whereby needle-thin instruments and a fibre optic tube are inserted into the pelvis through tiny incisions, and the abdomen is viewed by the specialist. Frustratingly, this will not always pinpoint the cause of the pain. Eight out of 10 women undergoing a laparoscopy for pelvic pain turn out to have a "normal" pelvis.

"A lot of women with pelvic pain don't have any obvious abnormality when you do a laparoscopy, and at least half of women with endometriosis don't have pain," explains Mr Philip Reginald, a consultant gynaecologist at Wexham Park Hospital, Slough.

To make absolutely certain the abnormal tissue on the screen is the cause of the pain, Mr Reginald has pioneered the use of "conscious pain mapping", a practice increasingly common in the US. This a laparoscopy done under local, rather than

general, anaesthetic, so the woman can give the doctor instant feedback.

Tweaking the viscera sounds unbearably painful, but Mr Reginald has carried out the operation on 30 women and not one asked him to abandon the procedure. Mr Reginald is one of a handful of gynaecologists practicing this technique, and it allows for accurate diagnosis.

Professor Richard Beard, a consultant gynaecologist at Northwick Park Hospital, Harrow, and Britain's leading specialist in pelvic pain, has suggested that pelvic congestion - chronic dilation of the pelvic veins - leads to a build-up of blood around the pelvis and consequent pain. Professor Beard believes the condition, mainly in women in their reproductive years, is caused by poorly functioning ovaries, which is linked to stress. Treatment is with hormones to suppress ovarian activity, and a course of stress and pain management.

When nothing else works, a gynaecologist will reluctantly suggest a hysterectomy. Adenomyosis, for instance, can be diagnosed only by examining the womb after removal. For three-quarters of women a hysterectomy does the trick, but a quarter are still left with their pain.

The National Endometriosis Society, 50 Westminster Palace Gardens, 1-7 Artillery Row, London. SWAP 1RL; call 0171-222 2776

HEALTH CHECK



JEREMY LAURANCE

I AM not a great believer in bribery but I did make one exception. As soon as my two sons were old enough to understand the cost of a copy of *The Beano* and a Kinder Egg, I promised them £500 when they were 21 if they didn't smoke. In exactly one year's time I expect to be paying out to the eldest and I am convinced it is the best investment I will ever make in my family's health.

I am therefore out of sympathy with the Australian public who have, according to a report in the *British Medical Journal*, taken against Shane Warne, the cricketer, for accepting the admittedly rather more generous bribe of \$200,000 Australian dollars (£77,000) to try to give up smoking using Nicorette chewing gum.

It is not, apparently, the sum involved that has angered ordinary Australians but the principle of bribing someone to do something that they should be doing anyway. Callers to radio stations have pointed out that promoting hair transplants, as former Test cricketer Greg Matthews did, is one thing but taking money to quit smoking is quite another.

All very odd, but it may be that in Britain we take a less self-righteous line. A New Year survey by the makers of Nicotin CQ nicotine patches found that most people would be in favour of small bribes paid by companies to employees who tried to give up. The bonus for the employers would come in the form of lower sickness absence among their workforce.

Whatever the effect of a small bribe on an adult it cannot possibly match that of a



Bribe a youth not to smoke

large bribe on a child. In offering my sons £500 a piece, I was continuing a family tradition (my father's offer to my brother and sister and I was £100). My own belief is that its maximum impact on my children was between the ages of about seven and 11, when the prospect of an unimaginably large sum of money served to anchor anti-smoking messages being served up at school.

Primary school children share a universal commitment to environmentalism and against toxic contaminants of all kinds, and the money meant that tobacco stood out as the most noxious substance of all.

I do, it is true, have a few hard questions to ask of the eldest about the long white cylinder stuck behind his ear in a photo he brought home from university this Christmas. Perhaps it is tightly rolled crib notes on Plato, a joint, a white pen top, or a device for snorting cocaine. I was not so foolish as to believe that my bribe would eliminate all experimentation. Experimentation is inevitable - necessary, even - and parenting is the art of the possible. As a friend once said to me, teenagers will always do everything at the equivalent of 100 miles an hour and the best you can hope for is to stop them doing it at 150 miles an hour.

In its recent white paper, *Smoking Kills*, the Government committed £50m over three years to anti-smoking advertising to persuade young people to desist from the habit, a huge increase on the £3m a year currently spent. It would, it is true, cost a great deal more to offer a realistic bribe to every teenager who resisted the lure of the weed - plus the cost of random urine tests to check the veracity of claimants - but what better investment in health could we make? Like the World Health Organisation's campaign to eliminate polio, we might wipe out smoking in a generation.

MEDIA

Are these six men the most influential journalists in Britain?

Life as an MP gives ex-hack Martin Linton a new perspective on the power of the press

I am instinctively sceptical about any kind of awards to journalists. Some might say it is because I have never received one – but I would say it is because it is not possible to define what makes a “good” journalist. Perhaps I should be even more sceptical about the idea of nominating the six most influential journalists in this country, but that is what I have just done. Let me first explain why.

I recently gave up a career as a journalist to become a Member of Parliament. This prompted a few radio chat shows, and more recently the *UK Press Gazette*, to take a look at journalistic hacks who become political hacks. The tenor of their questions was: why on earth did you give up all the power and influence of a job on a national newspaper for a job that is notoriously devoid of any power – namely, that of a backbencher?

My standard response was to say it was an arrogance for individual journalists to believe they had any power or influence over government. None of them had power and I couldn't name more than half a dozen who had what I would call influence.

I did not have any particular half dozen in mind, but I've been asked to nominate six and I'm happy to do so, although I do it in order to emphasise how few rather than how many journalists can be called “influential”.

It would be easy to add to the list, because all journalists can influence events if they can bring new insights or information to the public debate. But I am not talking of the consequences that an article may have. I am talking more narrowly about whether any journalists can influence government in any kind of systematic way through the articles they write.

The obvious place to look for this kind of influence is on the editorial pages of the national newspapers, the “facing” or editorial opinion pages, and the in-house columnists and outside contributors who appear on them. The first point to make is that articles from outside contributors are often more powerful than anything in-house. A well argued article by an expert in the field has the best chance of influencing policy-makers but it's tempting to rely on a stable of regular columnists who can write well and can come up with 900 words on the subject of the day by 2.30pm.

In any case there are some influential columnists on my list, including Don Macintyre from *The Independent*, Hugo Young from *The Guardian* and Peter Riddell from *The Times*. There are others who are expert enough on their own subjects to write really powerful columns. I could mention Melanie Phillips in the *Sunday Times* and Polly Toynbee in *The Guardian*.

It is more hair-raising for editors to find

outside experts. They may not write as vividly. They may not be able to bend to the pressures of deadlines. But they are far more likely – to borrow an old advertisement for *The Times* – to know their onions.

This is an area where I am happy to acknowledge – I don't think I'm being paid for this article – that the facing page of *The Independent* often scores over others by finding good outside writers. *The Express* and the *Daily Mail* are also good at commissioning outside, whereas *The Guardian*, for example, relies almost entirely on its own columnists. There was a time generally in newspapers when specialist journalists were often called on to write in greater depth about the issues in the news on the facing page, but they seem to have gone out of fashion.

On the right subject on the right day they are usually far more effective than the over-marketed “vivid writers”. I have included one example on my list, Nick Timmins, who is not only an expert on social services but has also written the definitive history of the welfare state, *The Five Giants*.

My other two nominees are the editors of *The Sun* and *The Mirror*, who wield little positive influence, but a great deal of potential negative influence – for the wounding of reputations, rather than for the winning of arguments. Negative influence, like negative campaigning, can be devastating. You have to remember – as I'm sure Tony Blair does – that *The Sun* was read by a fifth of voters at its peak and, more important, a third of “don't knows”.

However, Downing Street is far more likely to try to influence journalists than to be influenced by them. This is not because of the arrogance of politicians, but because journalists don't focus on policy issues in the way that politicians do. Just as politicians underestimate journalists, so journalists give too little credit to the fact that politics is a serious business. Its practitioners need to develop particular skills. Policy-making is perhaps the most important.

I don't pretend for one moment that my job as a Government backbencher gives me any great influence. But at least I feel I've tuned in to the debate. And having been on both ends of the politician-journalist relationship, I begin to understand how people must feel when they have been through a sex-change operation.

Politics looks very different from the inside, and so does journalism. But the two need to meet. And if newspapers are the forum in which public debate takes place, the crucible in which policies are cast and recast, then a lot of them are not exerting as much influence as they might.

Martin Linton, Labour MP for Battersea, worked on *The Guardian* from 1981-1997



Donald Macintyre
The Independent

The Independent's Donald Macintyre, who is currently finishing a biography of Peter Mandelson, has a subtle political brain and is the kind of journalist ministers see as well worth trying to influence – though it's not easily done.



Hugo Young
The Guardian

Hugo Young, a columnist for my Alma Mater, *The Guardian*, can be a devastatingly powerful ally to have on your side. He is widely respected, and on the right day and with the right subject, he oozes gravitas.



Peter Riddell
The Times

Peter Riddell, of *The Times*, has a brain like a giant sponge which soaks up millions of facts before he expresses an opinion. His articles are always very well argued, although that doesn't always make them right.



Nick Timmins
Financial Times

Nick Timmins, formerly of *The Independent* but now the public policy editor of the *Financial Times*, is the prototype of the specialist journalist whose influence stems from his knowledge.



David Yelland
The Sun

The editor of *The Sun*, David Yelland, I nominate not so much for the articles he runs – two recent ones, on gays and on the euro, have blown up in his face – but for strike power on politicians' personal reputations.



Piers Morgan
The Mirror

For similar reasons, the editor of *The Mirror*, Piers Morgan, again not for the articles he runs – certainly not for those on Prince Harry – but for the articles he, usually, restrains his reporters from writing.

A contract for justice

Since 1992, Channel 4's *Trial and Error* team has overturned 20 cases of miscarriage of justice. Now their success has won them a new contract. By Paul McCann

BEING A good guy can be good for you. Just Television, the investigative production company set up by David Jessel and the old *Rough Justice* team in 1992, has had the kind of 1998 that most other independents can only dream of. Channel 4 has signed a contract with Just Television – which currently makes *Trial and Error* – for the company's team of journalists and researchers to provide Channel 4 News with 10 investigations a year.

This follows a deal Just Television signed with *Dispatches* in September to become its in-house investigative team. *Dispatches* is made by a large number of production companies on contracts that rarely last more than three months; getting a long-term deal to uncover stories is a coup that has made the world of investigative television journalism quite green with envy.

But the company's position as Channel 4's favourite bloodhounds would seem to be deserved. Last month one of *Trial and Error's* key campaigns was vindicated when Danny McNamara had his appeal against conviction for the IRA Hyde Park bombing upheld. Since setting up in 1992, Just Television has managed to get 20 convictions quashed.

David Jessel denies that he and his partners, Stephen



David Jessel denies profiting from miscarriages of justice

Neville Elder

Phelps and Steve Haywood, are making a killing from miscarriages of justice: “The contracts from Channel 4 allow us to support on-going investigations and we have what you could call our *pro bono* arm. For example, there is the case now of Tony Dickinson, a alcoholic who was convicted of setting fire to a house in which two people died. Now, we haven't made a programme about him, but we have disagreed with the Criminal Cases Review

Commission's decision to reject his case. So, we are taking it to judicial review, but we've not made a programme about him. Jessel, Phelps and Haywood walked out of the BBC as a group to join Channel 4 when the BBC was refusing to make more than a few episodes of *Rough Justice* a year. The walk-out was not just because of lack of work: “You can't very well say to people, sorry you have to stew in jail another year to fit in with the BBC's scheduling

plans,” Jessel points out. Jessel had joined *Rough Justice* in 1985 after a career mainly in BBC radio and on the precursor to *Newsnight*, *24 Hours*. Once on *Rough Justice* he realised he had found his niche: “There is definitely a selfish sort of satisfaction attached to the job. Better journalists than us reveal huge farnies or corruption, whereas we focus on just one tragedy, although it is a heightened tragedy because being imprisoned for

something you haven't done is like being tortured for information you don't have.”

Jessel believes that the research skills perfected on *Trial and Error* – “We have our homework marked by the Court of Appeal, so it has to be pretty good” – won them the Channel 4 contracts. Just Television has already branched out into other current affairs topics – including the Monica Lewinsky case and, this week, an examination of the evidence in the Lockerbie bombing.

Some in the industry see Just Television's *Dispatches* and Channel 4 News contracts as evidence that the production company is a kind of conscience for Channel 4. “When *Dispatches* was cut back to half an hour and Dorothy Byrne was brought in from *The Big Story* there were worries that the programme would go down-market,” says a rival producer. “If 20/20, who do *The Big Story* for Carlton, had won that contract, it would have been a bad sign.”

Just Television is a very solid, respectable face for Channel 4. But the admiration for Jessel and his team is tinged with jealousy: “They have the best people because the *Trial and Error* contract allows them to keep them,” says the rival. “*Trial and Error* has been used as a base to make the company strong.”

THE WORD ON THE STREET

ONE DAY on the discard pile and already a tasty job proposition for Charlie Whelan, Gordon Brown's erstwhile leg spinner now in the market for “an appropriate opportunity”. The DTI is looking for a new Head of News. “You will have considerable experience of handling the media,” the ad begins hopefully, “have a clear, strong, written style and the ability to use it effectively (and) will be able to demonstrate a strong news sense.” Sounds promising. “You will be able to command the respect and confidence of Ministers, senior officials and media contacts,” it continues. So what's the catch, apart from having to sweep up after his old foe Peter Mandelson? Ah yes, the salary – a miserly £63,490 which, for Mr Whelan, would represent around a £15,000 pay cut.



the building.” Bishop confirms that his handiwork marks the first recorded example of an adman “empire destroying”.

CHANNEL 4's robust response to charges that there is far too much sex in its output? A gritty, groundbreaking current affairs series called *Porn Flakes*.

A NEW broom on the sixth floor of Saatchi & Saatchi's Charlotte Street offices in London. Or, to be more precise, a new mallet – happily wielded by the agency's international chairman Alan Bishop. The object of Bishop's hammerings is a wall erected by Maurice Saatchi. “He didn't like mixing with the underclass when he was here last,” says an agency spokesexecutive, “so he blocked off his corner of

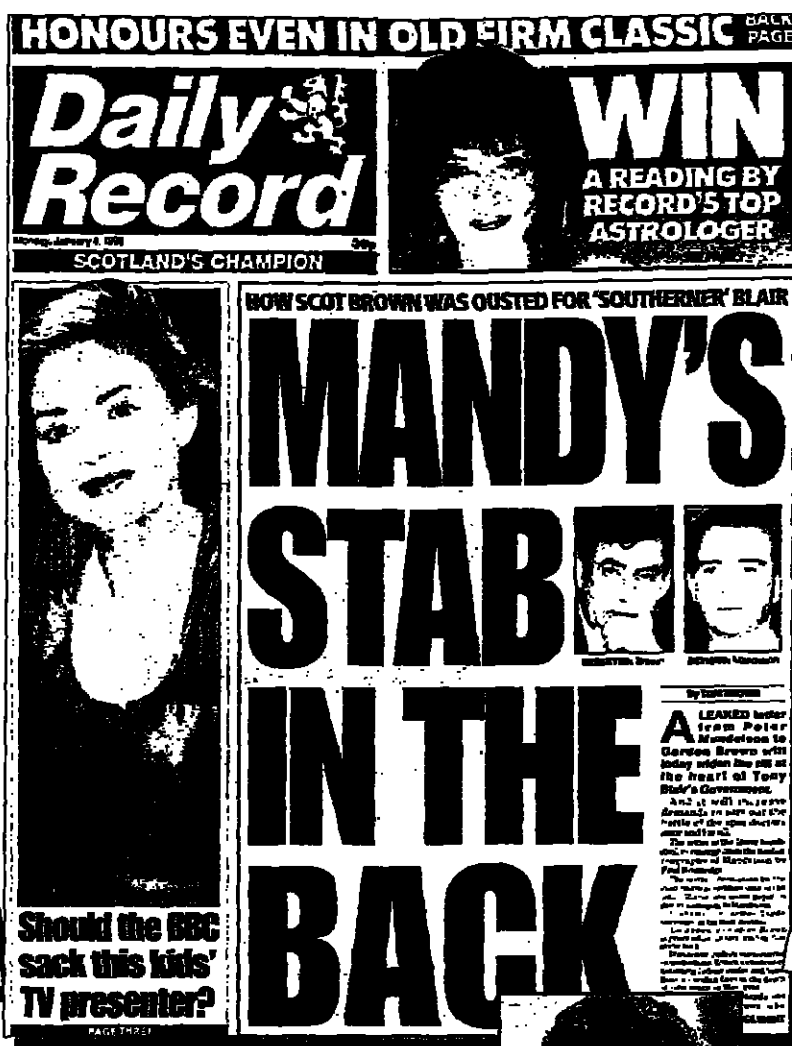
millennium in fact dawned four years ago and that the beano down on that barren stretch of Greenwich wasteland makes about as much sense as celebrating the October Revolution in March.

LIKE SPROUTS, sausage meat and Emva Cream, seasonal versions of regular programmes are a staple of Christmas (and frankly about as appetising). This year we had *Christmas from Hell*, *Christmas with the Clangers* and umpteen yuletide editions of everything from *Coronation Street* to the weather. One rather surprising omission from the canon was a glimpse of how the season was being celebrated at the Lakeside shopping centre in Thurrock, made famous by the acclaimed BBC 1 docu-soap *Lakesiders*. The production company Hart Ryan was desperate to film it, the BBC keen to screen it, the shopping centre every bit as anxious to feature in it. So why no show? Over to Walt Disney for an outpouring of seasonal goodwill. The company had sponsored the Lakeside's Christmas decorations and was not prepared to have even one drop of wax from Mickey Mouse's ear in shot. “It's brand management gone bonkers,” says a company source.

The Scots love their newspapers. But are they passionate enough for another Sunday title? By Mary Braid and Paul McCann



Andrew Neil is editor-in-chief of 'The Scotsman', which, along with the 'Edinburgh Evening News' and 'Scotland on Sunday', is part of the Scotsman Publications group owned by the Barclay Brothers



Martin Clarke is editor of the 'Daily Record', one of several titles owned by the Mirror Group in Scotland, including the Scottish 'Mirror', the 'Sunday Mail', and the weekly 'Glaswegian'. It also has a stake in the Scottish Media Group



Andrew Jaspas is working on the launch of a new Sunday title for the Scottish Media Group which owns the 'Daily Herald', the 'Evening Times' and Caledonian Magazines. SMG also owns Scottish Television and Grampian Television and STV Enterprises, the production arm of STV

Tartan: it's the colour of money

In the good old Fifties, as myth now has it, competition between newspapers in Scotland was so keen that rival reporters would slash each other's tyres to steal a yard in the pursuit of a hot story or to ensure that they were first back to the office with their copy.

In recent years that cut-throat sense of competition has returned to the Scottish media scene, hostilities between rival titles deteriorating virtually into all-out war.

Things began to heat up in the mid-Eighties when *The Sun* became the first London-based paper to set up a separate operation in Glasgow. Relations between it and the Scottish *Daily Record* – whose virtual monopoly of the marketplace had made it fat and complacent – quickly turned ugly.

Rival editors traded insults: *The Sun* even had its logo projected on to the wall of the *Record's* headquarters. There was no end to *The Sun's* zeal in its battle to win Scot-

tish hearts. This brave defender of British sovereignty against an evil Europe even came out for Scottish independence just before the country's devolution vote.

The *Daily Mail*, *Express* and *Mirror* have all followed *The Sun* north to exploit a marketplace which, strangely, continues to flourish while sales of newspapers south of the border shrivel. And now the temperature is set to rise again with the coming of Scotland's own parliament in May, the launch of a new home-grown newspaper – the *Sunday Herald* – and the beefing-up of the Scottish operations of English-based papers, including *The Telegraph*, *Times*, *Guardian* and *Independent* as well as the tabloids.

These are dizzy, breathless times. The question now is whether the new investments – particularly the substantial sums being sunk into the *Sunday Herald* by the Scottish Media Group – will bear fruit.

The early investments were less risky. *The Sun* and those who fol-

lowed it north wanted a slice of the UK's only booming media market. While 61 per cent of British people buy a Sunday paper, the Scottish figure is 76 per cent. For dailies the figures are 55 per cent for the UK and 65 per cent for Scotland.

Views differ as to why Scots continue to buy more papers. "People just read more," says Alf Young, deputy editor of the Glasgow-based *Herald*, soon to launch a sister Sunday. "It's a cultural thing and has been for as long as I can remember."

Jim Seaton, the former editor of the Edinburgh-based *Scotsman*, suspects it is to do with the enduring Scottish faith in education; others say that a better education system has produced a more literate population and one with a greater interest in politics than the others that make up the UK.

Scottish media analysts are less romantic. "There are a number of reasons, but the primary one is a national attachment to sport – particularly football," says Barbara

Moyses, of the Edinburgh-based media buying agency, Feather Brooksbank. "On Sundays and Mondays Scottish men often buy more than one paper to get different views of their teams."

Ms Moyses also points out that

The Scottish market flourishes while sales of papers south of the border shrivel

Scotland is "not one culture and the broadsheets here have always reflected that. There is a west coast culture – outgoing, glib and left-wing. Then there is an east coast culture, more restrained and middle-class. Then there is the culture of the northern cities and the Highlands..." The upshot is multiple buying on a daily basis.

Whatever the reasons – Robin Jack, of Faulds advertising agency, suggests that Scottish media consumption may have everything to do with the appalling weather – the post-parliamentary expansion now being banked on is less certain than the one that went before.

"The nature of the beast will change," says Ian McLaren, deputy editor of the Scottish *Daily Mail*, who, like every other editor, is recruiting for the expected boom as a new politics takes hold.

"At present we have appointed a political editor for Scotland and a political correspondent but we will probably need more as the agenda from the Scottish parliament develops. There will be less and less coming out of Westminster that is of interest to Scottish readers."

The reality is that all the English-based titles that have fought hard over the last decade for their slice of the Scottish market will have to provide for the new Scottish public interest or face losing their place.

But is this really the time to launch a new home-grown title? There has been no shortage of dark mutterings and dour predictions about the Glasgow-based Scottish Media Group's announcement last year that it would launch the *Sunday Herald* this year.

Some say it is a massive miscalculation, particularly as its main rival, the Edinburgh-based Scotsman Publication's *Scotland on Sunday*, is selling more than its most optimistic founders would have predicted at its launch more than a decade ago; in the last period for which figures are available – July to December 1998 – the average sale was 125,321, compared to 122,816 for January to June.

Ironically, Andrew Jaspas, who can take most of the credit for *Scotland on Sunday's* success, has been recruited as the *Sunday Herald* editor. However, some analysts believe that his creation has grown too strong to topple.

"It's a strange decision to launch

the *Sunday Herald*," says Mr Seaton. "It's very late for the Scottish Media Group to launch a rival to *Scotland on Sunday*, which is now firmly established and extremely successful. And it's very strange to announce it well in advance and give the opposition so much warning."

The greatest irony, says Mr Seaton, is that Mr Jaspas's biggest achievement with *Scotland on Sunday* was, perhaps, to shatter the traditional east coast/west coast divide. Under him, the Edinburgh title also became popular in Glasgow. The *Sunday Herald* is up against a rival not just popular on the opposite coast but in its own backyard.

One observer is more optimistic. The new paper might still find a place in the buoyant market, he says, particularly if it is younger, more fashionable, and more arty than its rival, as Mr Jaspas has promised. A market that bucks the national trend has already managed to accommodate so many newcomers. Why not this one?

APPOINTMENTS: MEDIA, MARKETING, GENERAL

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Brill's lack of style could be the downfall of his content

The magazine pitched as the watchdog of the American media seems to be chasing its own tail to oblivion. By Andrew Marshall in Washington

IT HIT the newsstands like a comet, burning its way on to virtually every front page and television news programme across the country. But *Brill's Content*, the media magazine launched to enormous publicity earlier this year in the US, has apparently burned out.

Steven Brill, the media entrepreneur who launched *American Lawyer* magazine and Court TV, looked as if he had hit gold once again when the magazine hit the newsstands. The first issue featured a lengthy look at media coverage of the Monica Lewinsky case. Mr Brill was all over the talk shows, pitching not just the product but its philosophy. It is there as a media watchdog, to maintain standards, investigate wrongdoing and brush up the sloppy practices that persist in the American press, he said.

The problem with the US media is "a lack of systematic, independent accountability," he told Mother Jones magazine. "We will be a consumer guide for people to choose reliable, responsible information. We will use the marketplace to help journalists do the right thing," he told the National Press Club last year.

There has been a slew of stories about poor journalism practices, plagiarism and overactive imaginations. Steven Glass, a young reporter at the *New Republic*, was revealed to



Steven Brill and his troubled title



Media Magazine

have made up wholesale his stories; two columnists departed from the *Boston Globe* after some of their quotes and characters were questioned; CNN came under heavy fire over its report into Operation Tailwind, a Vietnam-era episode where CNN claimed the US had used nerve gas, and the Pentagon said it hadn't.

Brill tapped into this, laying into all the sacred cows of the American media, from ABC News and Dateline NBC to *Time* magazine. It didn't make Mr Brill many friends in the mainstream media. "I will predict it's going to be a bumpy ride as journalists... have to get used to the fact that... in terms of no longer being accountable to the consumers in an organised way, the jig is up. The people who are your customers are our constituency."

But who, exactly, are those customers? Mr Brill said that the first edition sold out its 250,000 initial run, and a second printing of 75,000. Subsequent sales, however, have not been quite so exciting.

"We've had a ton of cancellations from the people on the Right because of the first issue [which attacked Kenneth Starr]. And I promise you that the second issue or the third issue, we'll get a ton of cancellations from people on the left," he said to *Mother Jones*.

Last month, the editor-in-chief, Michael Kramer, stepped down. "It's an unhappy circumstance," said Mr Brill. "It has to do with... an internal personnel issue."

But, not surprisingly, there was widespread speculation that the magazine might be in for a rethink. A lot of it is mind-

numbing statistics; and the focus on accuracy can be a little deadening after a while. A lot of media writing is fussy and celebrity-focused: while *Brill's Content* goes to the other extreme – a bit of bluff might not come amiss.

There has been other criticism. The media had been "corrupted to its core" by Mr Starr and his investigation, Mr Brill said in the first issue. Well, hadn't Mr Brill himself given \$2,000 (£1,300) to the Clinton election campaign? And if he was so hot on professional standards, why hadn't he recorded the interview with Mr Starr that formed the basis for his article?

It is the magazine's narrow focus, however, that has probably done it most harm. "There's more to truth than facts," says *Salon Magazine*, an online service that deals with media issues. "By churning out one soporific doozy after another, it is effectively telling editors that if you follow Dr Brill's Patented System for Quality Journalism, you will produce a boring magazine."

To some extent, Mr Brill is the victim of deflated expectations. The media loves to build up and then knock down. Matt Drudge, the Internet journalist who has also been scathing about traditional journalism, had advice for Mr Brill after his PR offensive. "Feed the hungry machine slowly," he said.

NEW FILMS

THE ACID HOUSE (18)

Director: Paul McGuigan
Starring: Stephen McCole, Kevin McKidd, Ewen Bremner
A trio of interrelated shorts culled from the stories of Irvine Welsh, *The Acid House* plays out in the down-and-dirty landscape of some of Edinburgh's less salubrious areas and darts with hie between a range of moods and tones. Story number one, "The Granton Star Cause", is a playful riff on Kafka's *Metamorphosis* as layabout wastrel Boob (McCole) gets conjured into a fly by the vengeful, boozing God (Maurice Roëves) whom he meets down the pub.

Story two, "A Soft Touch", comes on as a kind of social-realist Special Brew opera, as its affable, emasculated hero (the brilliant Kevin McKidd) finds himself cheated on by his missus and menaced by the tattooed thug who lives upstairs. Story three, "The Acid House", is both the most ambitious and the least coherent, an indiscriminate what-if scenario which has Ewen Bremner's rave kid switching places with a newborn bairn. In it, the revelations of an acid-trip are cross-cut to the trauma of birth, yet a clever conceit stays unfulfilled, buried under a ton of showy hallucinogenics. Overall, though, debut director Paul McGuigan (who trained as a stills photographer) turns *The Acid House* into a bit of a triumph; adapting his style well to the shifting landscape of Welsh's tales and rustling up a film that's less poised and populist than *Trainspotting*, but more earthy, edgy and intense, too. A cracker, all told.

West End: Gate Notting Hill, Odeon Camden Town, Plaza, Ritzy Cinema, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Haymarket, Warner Village West End

SITCOM (18)

Director: François Ozon
Starring: Evelyne Dandry, François Marthourat, Marina de Van
Someone ought to introduce François Ozon to a good editor. The debuting French film-maker is

clearly a man of talent, but in *Sitcom* he lets his ideas maraud madly off the leash. This scattergun satire on middle-class mores takes abundant pleasure in dismantling a standard nuclear family (*mère, père, fils et fille*) - setting a rat loose in the home and interjecting an implicitly queer and subversive vein to the increasingly fraught shenanigans. The result is sharp, funny and savage one moment, over-heated and indulgent the next, and arrives heavily touched by the influence of Luis Buñuel and John Waters. Ozon's still, formal framing strikes a nice balance with the craziness contained inside.

West End: Barbican Screen, Clapham Picture House, Curzon Soho, Virgin Chelsea

STAR TREK: INSURRECTION (PG)
Director: Jonathan Frakes
Starring: Patrick Stewart
A belated Christmas gift for Trekkies the land over, *Insurrection* hits the cinemas stuffed with in-the-know gags, ribboned and bowed with reliably cheesy art-design and effects work, and wrapped up in rather more cornball romance than we're used to.

The yarn is nominally about Patrick Stewart's do-gooding captain tussling with villainous F Murray Abraham, who has hatched a scheme to take over an Eden-like planet of perpetual youth. The trouble is that the whole *Star Trek* phenomenon has become less a story now than a series of self-reflective gestures. *Insurrection* takes no real risks with the format; it simply navel-gazes for a while, gives floorspace to the regulars and idles its way along to the climactic explosion.

West End: ABC Baker Street, ABC Tottenham Court Road, Elephant & Castle Coronet, Empire Leicester Square, Hammersmith Virgin, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Trocadero

Xan Brooks

THE INDEPENDENT RECOMMENDS

THE FIVE BEST FILMS

The Truman Show (15)

Peter Weir's ingenious and unsettling fantasy is, in the end, an escape movie - in the case of Jim Carrey's Truman Burbank it is breaking out of the round-the-clock TV docu-soap that is his own life.

Out of Sight (15)

This tale of love on opposite sides of the law from director Steven Soderbergh manages to knock spots off every previous Elmore Leonard adaptation, and boasts in George Clooney and Jennifer Lopez the most romantic pairing of the cinematic year.

Antz (PG)

Computer-animated comedy (right) voiced by a stellar cast and starring Woody Allen as a worker ant who becomes an opponent of the colony's totalitarian regime. Allen's best work in a while.

My Name is Joe (15)

All that one would expect from a Ken Loach film - humour, indignation, emotional sympathy - driven by Peter Mullan's scary, intense performance as a recovering alcoholic.

The Dream Life of Angels (18)

Erick Zanca's remarkable debut draws its strength from the contrasting personalities of Isa (Elodie Bouchez) and Marie (Natacha Regnier), whose friendship comes alive amid the drab environs of Lille.

THE FIVE BEST PLAYS

Mr Pontila and His Man Matti

Albery Theatre
A well-deserved transfer for this Almeida hit. Comedy duo The Right Size are inspired casting for Brecht's witty fable about a split-personality landowner. To 9 Jan

Love Upon the Throne

Comedy Theatre
The Charles and Diana story (well, up to the divorce) presented by the National Theatre of Brent (right). Hilarious and oddly touching. To 31 Jan

Martin Guerre

West Yorkshire Playhouse, Leeds
It's third time lucky for this much-rewritten Bosh/Schoenberg musical. In Conall Morrison's starkly involving production, it finally emerges as a tighter magnificent show. To 13 Feb

Angela Carter Cinderella

Lyric, Hammersmith
This feast of inspired seasonal silliness and visual magic by Angela Carter has lashings of drag and double entendres, plus the best music to be found anywhere on a West End stage. To 9 Jan

A Month in the Country

Swan Theatre, Stratford
Ireland's finest living dramatist, Brian Friel, adapts Turgenev's proto-Chekhovian comedy. To 20 Feb

PAUL TAYLOR

THE FIVE BEST SHOWS

Charlotte Salomon

Royal Academy
"Life? Or Theatre?" Salomon's life in pictures. Her 405 raw gouaches tell the story of the German Jewish girl's haste before Auschwitz - an expressionistic operetta in three colours. To 10 Jan

Grinling Gibbons

Victoria & Albert Museum
Fruit, flowers and foliage - the best chisel-work of the great 17th-century English woodcarver, who made intricacy and the abundance of nature his trademark. To 24 Jan

Chris Ofili

Whitworth Gallery, Manchester
This 1998 Turner Prize-winner (right) is an upbeat original, his surfaces dense and decorative, with swirls of dots, Afros and black icons, and incorporating elephant dung. To 24 Jan

Goya: The Disparates

Maidstone Museum & Art Gallery
Goya was deaf, ill and in his seventies when he produced his last series of etchings. Mysterious in intention, it is a vivid world: life is folly, men fly off on wings into darkness. To 23 Jan

Edward Burne-Jones

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery
Centenary exhibition gathers together many favourites illustrating Burne-Jones's romantic and medievalist neither world. To 17 Jan

TOM LUBBOCK

GENERAL RELEASE

ANTZ (PG)

See The Independent Recommends, above.
West End: ABC Tottenham Court Road, Rio Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Trocadero

THE APPLE (18) (PG)

Seventeen-year-old Samira Makhmalbaf's precocious debut stages a true-life recreation of the fortunes of Iran's Naderi sisters. A luminous and extraordinary narrative from a burgeoning Iranian film scene. West End: Metro, Renoir

BASE: PIG IN THE CITY (U)

The follow-up to *Babe* takes the hapless "sheep pig" into the midst of the city where he becomes the unlikely saviour of a bunch of assorted wits. West End: Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Plaza, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Trocadero

DANCING AT LUGHNASSA (PG)

Pat O'Connor's Ireland-set saga pinpoints the ebb and flow of an eccentric Catholic family in Donegal. What gives it backbone is Meryl Streep's regal performance as the brood's eldest sister, plus the ever watchable Michael Gambon as the homecoming brother. West End: Curzon Mayfair

THE DREAM LIFE OF ANGELS (18)

See The Independent Recommends, above.
West End: ABC Swiss Centre

ELIZABETH (15)

Shekhar Kapur's follow-up to *Bandit Queen* is the story of another female figurehead - this time it's Queen Elizabeth I - struggling to gain purchase in a male world. West End: ABC Pantons Street, Curzon Soho, Curzon Minima, Odeon Mezzanine, Phoenix Cinema, Rio Cinema, Virgin Fulham Road

ENEMY OF THE STATE (15)

Will Smith's fall-guy DA teams up with Gene Hackman's pensioned-off Pentagon warhorse, to probe a political cover-up and gets embroiled in all manner of Big Brother-type trouble. West End: ABC Tottenham Court Road, Clapham Picture House, Hammersmith Virgin, Notting Hill Coronet, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Odeon West End, Ritzy Cinema, Screen on the Green, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road

THE MASK OF ZORRO (PG)

This gaudy swashbuckler gallops at full-speed through 19th-century California in the company of Antonio Banderas's authentically Hispanic do-gooder. A bite-sized history lesson on West Coast politics jostles for purchase amid clattering action set-pieces. West End: Clapham Picture House, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Leicester Square, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road

THE MIGHTY (PG)

Peter Chelsom's *The Mighty* treads through familiar coming-of-age country with its tale of two outcast kids (one fat, the other sickly) in a storybook Cincinnati. It's all a bit stolid and a tad predictable, though there's a glimmer of soul showing through. Sharon Stone and *The X-Files*' Gillian Anderson cope well in what basically amounts to supporting roles. West End: Screen on the Hill, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Haymarket

MY NAME IS JOE (15)

See The Independent Recommends, above.
West End: ABC Pantons Street, Curzon Soho, Virgin Haymarket

THE NEGOTIATOR (15)

Samuel L. Jackson and Kevin Spacey go head to head in Gray's thrilling drama. The script has a predilection for lunk-headed swearing which sounds uneasy in the mouths of such articulate performers. West End: UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End

OUT OF SIGHT (15)

See The Independent Recommends, above.
West End: Empire Leicester Square, Odeon

Kensington, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Phoenix Cinema, Rio Cinema, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Trocadero

THE PARENT TRAP (PG)

The Parent Trap catches Disney re-heating its 1961 Hayley Mills heart-warmer as this spry cross-cultural caper starring Lindsay Lohan as the separated-at-birth twin sisters (one British, one American) trying to get their parents (Natalie Richardson, Dennis Quaid) back together. West End: Clapham Picture House, Hammersmith Virgin, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Odeon West End, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea

A PERFECT MURDER (15)

With Hollywood awash with dumb re-makes, the news that Hitchcock's classic *Dial M for Murder* was to be rebashed did not bode well. But this is not bad at all. Michael Douglas stars as the cuckolded city shark who blackmails an artist into killing his mistress wife, Gwyneth Paltrow. This is gold-plated trash: the sort of thing Hollywood does better than anyone else. West End: Warner Village West End

THE PHILADELPHIA STORY (U)

Sublime cinema. It's a fast-talking romantic comedy of course, but there's nothing silly or trivial about it. George Cukor's movie has a strange and melancholy heart and Katharine Hepburn's unsatisfied headdress sheds real tears. West End: Curzon Mayfair, Renoir

THE PRINCE OF EGYPT (U)

In planning his cartoon life of Moses, DreamWorks honcho Jeffrey Katzenberg envisaged it "painted by Claude Monet and photographed by David Lean". The end result winds up as *The Ten Commandments* by way of Joseph and his Technicolor Dreamcoat. West End: ABC Baker Street, ABC Tottenham Court Road, Clapham Picture House, Elephant & Castle Coronet, Empire Leicester Square, Hammersmith Virgin, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Trocadero

RONIN (15)

Rather than adding value, John Frankenheimer's 40 years as a feature director lend an air of knackered resignation to his latest movie, which stars Robert De Niro. Thrill-an-hour stuff. West End: Odeon Mezzanine, Virgin Trocadero

RUSH HOUR (15)

Jackie Chan and Chris Tucker's star in this hit-and-miss affair. West End: Hammersmith Virgin, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Plaza, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End

THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT MARY (15)

Ben Stiller, Cameron Diaz and Matt Dillon star in the latest comedy from the pathologically tasteless writer-director team of Peter and Bobby Farrelly: previous repulsive but shamefully funny crimes against humanity: *Dumb and Dumber* and *Kingpin*. The film is basically a soft-centred romantic comedy of the kind which drifts out of Hollywood on a regular basis. The gags never amount to more than vulgar icing on an unexceptionally bland cake. West End: ABC Piccadilly, Odeon Mezzanine

THE TRUMAN SHOW (PG)

See The Independent Recommends, above.
West End: Plaza, Virgin Trocadero

WHAT DREAMS MAY COME (15)

Along comes Christmas and out comes *What Dreams May Come*. Robin Williams perfects a lopsided simper as the dead chappie who lights out to a cod-Impressionist heaven, before jetting southward to rescue his suicide bride. West End: ABC Baker Street, ABC Shaftesbury Avenue, Clapham Picture House, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Haymarket, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End

CINEMA

WEST END

ABC BAKER STREET

(0870-902 0418) @ Baker Street
The Prince of Egypt 1.40pm, 4pm
Star Trek: Insurrection 1.20pm, 3.40pm, 6pm, 8.30pm
What Dreams May Come 6.05pm, 8.35pm

ABC PANTONS STREET

(0870-902 0404) @ Piccadilly
Circus Everest 1.20pm, 5.10pm, 8.10pm
The Last Days of Disco 1.10pm, 3.40pm, 6pm, 8.25pm
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 1.10pm, 3.35pm, 6pm, 8.30pm
My Name is Joe 1.10pm, 3.35pm, 6pm, 8.25pm

ABC PICCADILLY

(0171-287 4322 (from 1pm)) @ Piccadilly
Circus Everest 1.20pm, 5.10pm, 8.10pm
The Last Days of Disco 1.10pm, 3.40pm, 6pm, 8.25pm
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 1.10pm, 3.35pm, 6pm, 8.30pm
My Name is Joe 1.10pm, 3.35pm, 6pm, 8.25pm

ABC SWISS CENTRE

(0870-902 0402) @ Leicester Square
Circus Everest 1.20pm, 5.10pm, 8.10pm
The Last Days of Disco 1.10pm, 3.40pm, 6pm, 8.25pm
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 1.10pm, 3.35pm, 6pm, 8.30pm
My Name is Joe 1.10pm, 3.35pm, 6pm, 8.25pm

ABC TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD

(0870-902 0414) @ Tottenham Court Road
Antz 4.45pm, 9.45pm
Enemy of the State 1.05pm, 4.45pm, 8.25pm
The Prince of Egypt 1.20pm, 4.45pm, 8.25pm
Star Trek: Insurrection 1.20pm, 4.45pm, 8.25pm

BARBICAN SCREEN

(0171-638 8891) @ Barbican
The Mighty 6.15pm, 8.40pm
Strom 6.15pm, 8.40pm

CHELSEA CINEMA

(0171-351 3742) @ Sloane Square
On Connell 1pm, 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.35pm

CLAPHAM PICTURE HOUSE

(0171-498 3323) @ Clapham
Common Enemy of the State 6.20pm, 9pm
The Mask of Zorro 1.15pm, 4pm
The Parent Trap 1.30pm, 3.30pm
Scream 5.30pm, 7.30pm, 9.30pm

CURZON MAYFAIR

(0171-369 1720) @ Green Park
Banding at Lughnassa 4.15pm, 9pm
The Philadelphia Story 2pm, 6.30pm

CURZON SOHO

(0171-734 2255 (12pm-6pm)) @ Leicester Square
Circus Everest 1.20pm, 5.10pm, 8.10pm
The Last Days of Disco 1.10pm, 3.40pm, 6pm, 8.25pm
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 1.10pm, 3.35pm, 6pm, 8.30pm
My Name is Joe 1.10pm, 3.35pm, 6pm, 8.25pm

ELEPHANT AND CASTLE CORONET

(0171-703 4968) @ Elephant & Castle
The Prince of Egypt 4.10pm, 6.30pm, 8.35pm
Star Trek: Insurrection 4.10pm, 6.30pm, 8.35pm

EMPIRE LEICESTER SQUARE

(0990-888990) @ Leicester Square
Out of Sight 12.10pm, 2.35pm, 5.50pm, 8.25pm
The Price of Egypt 10.45am, 1pm, 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.30pm
Star Trek: Insurrection 11pm, 1.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm, 9pm

GATE NOTTING HILL

(0171-721 4043) @ Notting Hill
Gate The Acid House 1.15pm, 3.45pm, 6.15pm, 8.50pm

HAMMERSMITH VIRGIN

(0171-721 0718) @ Ravenscourt Park/Hammersmith
Enemy of the State 3pm, 6.10pm, 9.10pm
The Prince of Egypt 12.10pm, 4.20pm, 6.30pm
Rush Hour 4.40pm, 8.40pm
Star Trek: Insurrection 1.30pm, 3.30pm, 6.20pm, 8.50pm

ICA CINEMA

(0171-930 3647) @ Charing Cross
Sex/Life in LA 5pm, 7pm, 9pm

METRO

(0171-734 1506) @ Piccadilly
Circus Everest 1.20pm, 5.10pm, 8.10pm
The Last Days of Disco 1.10pm, 3.40pm, 6pm, 8.25pm
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 1.10pm, 3.35pm, 6pm, 8.30pm

CURZON MINEMA

(0171-369 1723) @ Hyde Park Corner/Kingsbridge
Elizabeth 2.20pm, 6.40pm
Fire 4.35pm, 9pm

NOTTING HILL CORONET

(0171-727 6705) @ Notting Hill
Gate Enemy of the State 3pm, 5.50pm, 8.30pm

ODEON CAMDEN TOWN

(0870-050007) @ Camden Town
The Acid House 1.10pm, 2.05pm, 4.20pm, 6.35pm, 8.55pm
Enemy of the State 12.05pm, 2.45pm, 5.30pm, 8.30pm
The Mask of Zorro 3.30pm, 8.35pm
The Prince of Egypt 11.45am, 1.55pm
Star Trek: Insurrection 12.15pm, 2.25pm, 4.35pm, 6.45pm, 9.10pm
What Dreams May Come 4pm, 6.15pm, 8.45pm

ODEON HAYMARKET

(0870-050007) @ Piccadilly
Circus Everest 1.20pm, 5.10pm, 8.10pm
The Last Days of Disco 1.10pm, 3.40pm, 6pm, 8.25pm
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 1.10pm, 3.35pm, 6pm, 8.30pm
My Name is Joe 1.10pm, 3.35pm, 6pm, 8.25pm

ODEON KENSINGTON

(0870-050007) @ High Street
Kensington Babe: Pig in the City 12.10pm, 2.30pm, 5.10pm, 8.30pm
The Mask of Zorro 3.30pm, 8.35pm
The Prince of Egypt 11.45am, 1.55pm
Star Trek: Insurrection 12.15pm, 2.25pm, 4.35pm, 6.45pm, 9.10pm
What Dreams May Come 4pm, 6.15pm, 8.45pm

ODEON LEICESTER SQUARE

(0870-050007) @ Leicester Square
The Mask of Zorro 1.10pm, 3.30pm, 6.30pm, 8.30pm
The Prince of Egypt 11.45am, 1.55pm
Star Trek: Insurrection 12.15pm, 2.25pm, 4.35pm, 6.45pm, 9.10pm
What Dreams May Come 4pm, 6.15pm, 8.45pm

ODEON MARBLE ARCH

(0870-050007) @ Marble Arch
Enemy of the State 12.05pm, 3.05pm, 6.05pm, 9.05pm
The Mask of Zorro 1.10pm, 3.30pm, 6.30pm, 8.30pm
The Prince of Egypt 11.45am, 1.55pm
Star Trek: Insurrection 12.15pm, 2.25pm, 4.35pm, 6.45pm, 9.10pm
What Dreams May Come 4pm, 6.15pm, 8.45pm

ODEON MEZZANINE

(0870-050007) @ Leicester Square
Elizabeth 1.20pm, 3.35pm, 6.20pm, 8.25pm
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 1.25pm, 3.55pm, 6.20pm, 8.45pm
Les Misérables 3.30pm, 8.30pm
Mulan 1.40pm, 3.50pm, 6.50pm, 9.50pm
Snakes & Ladders 1.10pm, 3.15pm, 5.45pm, 8.20pm

ODEON SWISS COTTAGE

(0870-050007) @ Swiss Cottage
Babe: Pig in the City 12.10pm, 2.30pm, 5.10pm, 8.30pm
The Mask of Zorro 3.30pm, 8.35pm
The Prince of Egypt 11.45am, 1.55pm
Star Trek: Insurrection 12.15pm, 2.25pm, 4.35pm, 6.45pm, 9.10pm
What Dreams May Come 4pm, 6.15pm, 8.45pm

ODEON TROCADERO

(0870-050007) @ Piccadilly
Circus Everest 1.20pm, 5.10pm, 8.10pm
The Last Days of Disco 1.10pm, 3.40pm, 6pm, 8.25pm
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 1.10pm, 3.35pm, 6pm, 8.30pm
My Name is Joe 1.10pm, 3.35pm, 6pm, 8.25pm

ODEON VIRGIN FULHAM ROAD

(0870-050007) @ South Kensington
The Acid House 1.10pm, 3.30pm, 6.30pm, 8.30pm
The Mask of Zorro 3.30pm, 8.35pm
The Prince of Egypt 11.45am, 1.55pm
Star Trek: Insurrection 12.15pm, 2.25pm, 4.35pm, 6.45pm, 9.10pm
What Dreams May Come 4pm, 6.15pm, 8.45pm

ODEON VIRGIN TROCADERO

(0870-050007) @ Piccadilly
Circus Everest 1.20pm, 5.10pm, 8.10pm
The Last Days of Disco 1.10pm, 3.40pm, 6pm, 8.25pm
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 1.10pm, 3.35pm, 6pm, 8.30pm
My Name is Joe 1.10pm, 3.35pm, 6pm, 8.25pm

ODEON VIRGIN WEST END

(0870-050007) @ Leicester Square
The Mask of Zorro 1.10pm, 3.30pm, 6.30pm, 8.30pm
The Prince of Egypt 11.45am, 1.55pm
Star Trek: Insurrection 12.15pm, 2.25pm, 4.35pm, 6.45pm, 9.10pm
What Dreams May Come 4pm, 6.15pm, 8.45pm

ODEON VIRGIN WHITELEYS

(0870-050007) @ Whiteleys
The Mask of Zorro 1.10pm, 3.30pm, 6.30pm, 8.30pm
The Prince of Egypt 11.45am, 1.55pm
Star Trek: Insurrection 12.15pm, 2.25pm, 4.35pm, 6.45pm, 9.10pm
What Dreams May Come 4pm, 6.15pm, 8.45pm

ODEON VIRGIN WHITELEYS

(0870-050007) @ Whiteleys
The Mask of Zorro 1.10pm, 3.30pm, 6.30pm, 8.30pm
The Prince of Egypt 11.45am, 1.55pm
Star Trek: Insurrection 12.15pm, 2.25pm, 4.35pm, 6.45pm, 9.10pm
What Dreams May Come 4pm, 6.15pm, 8.45pm

ODEON VIRGIN WHITELEYS

(0870-0

HOLLOWAY
ODEON (08705 050007) • Holloway Road/Archway Antz 12.00pm
Babe: Pig in the City 12.00pm
Enemy of the State 12.00pm
2.45pm, 5.10pm, 5.35pm, 8pm,
8.35pm The Mask of Zorro
2.05pm, 5.10pm, 8.25pm out of
Sight 5.50pm, 8.35pm The Parent
Trap 12.25pm, 3.05pm The Prince
of Egypt 12.10pm, 2.20pm,
4.35pm, 6.50pm Rush Hour
3.55pm, 6.25pm, 8.25pm, 9.05pm
Star Trek: Insurrection 1.15pm,
3.45pm, 6.20pm, 8.50pm What
Dreams May Come 12.40pm,
3.05pm, 5.45pm, 8.50pm

ILFORD
ODEON (08705 050007) • Gants
Hill Babe: Pig in the City 12.05pm
Enemy of the State 12.00pm,
2.40pm, 5.30pm, 8.20pm The
Mask of Zorro 2.15pm, 5.15pm,
8.10pm The Parent Trap 12.10pm,
3.10pm The Prince of Egypt 1.50pm,
4.10pm Rush Hour 6.20pm,
8.40pm Star Trek: Insurrection
1.40pm, 4pm, 6.30pm, 8.50pm
What Dreams May Come 5.50pm,
8.30pm

KILBURN
TRICYCLE THEATRE (0171-328
1000) • Kilburn Enemy of the State
6.20pm, 8.55pm

KINGSTON UPON THAMES
ABC OPTIONS (0870-9020409)
BR: Kingston Babe: Pig in the City
12.15pm Enemy of the State
5.15pm, 8.05pm The Parent Trap
2.25pm The Prince of Egypt
1.15pm, 3.30pm Star Trek: Insurrection
1.15pm, 3.40pm, 6.05pm,
8.30pm

MUSWELL HILL
ODEON (08705 050007) • Highgate
Enemy of the State 2.50pm,
5.45pm, 8.25pm The Mask of Zorro
5.15pm, 8.15pm The Parent Trap
12.15pm The Prince of Egypt
12.50pm, 3pm Star Trek: Insurrection
11.40am, 1.40pm, 4.15pm,
6.35pm, 8.50pm

PECKHAM
PREMIER (0181-235 3006) BR:
Peckham Rise Antz 1.50pm Babe:
Pig in the City 12.00pm Enemy of
the State 12.35pm, 3.20pm,
6.05pm, 8.50pm, 11.30pm The
Mask of Zorro 3.30pm, 6.15pm,
8.30pm The Parent Trap 1.15pm,
11.45am, 2.10pm The Prince of
Egypt 2.35pm Rush Hour 2.45pm,
5pm, 7.15pm, 9.30pm Star Trek:
Insurrection 4.40pm, 7.05pm,
9.20pm What Dreams May Come
4.35pm, 7pm, 9.25pm

PURLEY
ABC (0870-9020407) BR: Purley
Babe: Pig in the City 12.05pm
Enemy of the State 4.55pm, 8pm
The Parent Trap 2.20pm Star Trek:
Insurrection 1.20pm, 3.20pm,
6.20pm, 8.30pm What Dreams
May Come 5.50pm, 8.20pm

PURLEY
ABC (0870-9020401) • Purley
Babe: Pig in the City 12.05pm
Enemy of the State 5.15pm, 8.15pm
The Parent Trap 2.15pm Star Trek:
Insurrection 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.30pm
What Dreams May Come 5.45pm,
8.25pm

RICHMOND
ODEON (08705 050007) BR/VE
Richmond Enemy of the State
12.10pm, 3pm, 6pm, 9pm Star
Trek: Insurrection 1.30pm, 4pm,
6.50pm, 9.30pm

ODEON STUDIO (08705 050007)
BR/VE Richmond Antz 12.00pm
Babe: Pig in the City 12.05pm
Enemy of the State 5.15pm, 8.15pm
The Parent Trap 2.15pm Star Trek:
Insurrection 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.30pm
What Dreams May Come 5.45pm,
8.25pm

ROCHFORD
ABC (0870-9020419) BR: Rochford
Babe: Pig in the City 12.30pm
Enemy of the State 5.20pm, 8.10pm
The Parent Trap 2.40pm The Prince
of Egypt 12.55pm, 3.05pm Star
Trek: Insurrection 1.20pm, 3.45pm,
6.10pm, 8.35pm What Dreams
May Come 5.40pm, 8.20pm

ODEON LIBERTY 2 (08705
050007) BR: Rochford Antz 12.00pm
Babe: Pig in the City 12.05pm
Enemy of the State 5.15pm, 8.15pm
The Parent Trap 2.15pm Star Trek:
Insurrection 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.30pm
What Dreams May Come 5.45pm,
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THEATRE
WEST END

Ticket availability details are for today's times and prices for the week; running times include intervals. • Seats at all prices • Seats at some prices • Returns only • Matinees • [1]: Sun, [3]: Tue, [4]: Wed, [5]: Thu, [6]: Fri, [7]: Sat

ALARMIS & EXCURSIONS
Michael Frayn's new comedy about a dinner party which is interrupted by mysterious messages stars Felicity Kendal and Josie Lawrence. Gielgud Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (0171-494 5065) • Picc Circ. Mon-Sat 7.45pm, [5][7] 3pm, £19.50-£27.50, 130 mins.

AMADEUS David Suchet stars as Salieri in Peter Shaffer's acclaimed drama based on the life of Mozart. Old Vic Theatre, SE1 (0171-238 7616) • Picc Circ. Mon-Sat 7.45pm, [5][7] 3pm, £19.50-£27.50, 130 mins.

ANNIE Raggy to riches story of the optimistic orphan and her head of dancing clowns. Victoria Palace Theatre, SW1 (0171-834 1317) BR/VE Victoria. Tue-Sat 7.30pm, [4][7] 2.30pm, [1] 4pm, £7.50-£32.50, 165 mins.

ART Larry Lamb, Jack Dee, Tim Healy in Yasmina Reza's comedy about art and friendship. Wyndham's Theatre, WC2 (0171-369 1736) • Picc Circ. Mon-Sat 7.45pm, [5][7] 3pm, £19.50-£27.50, 130 mins.

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST Disney's cartoon version of the favourite fairy tale. Dominion Theatre, WC2 (0171-656 1888) • Picc Circ. Mon-Sat 7.30pm, [5][7] 2.30pm, £18.50-£35, 150 mins.

BLOOD BROTHERS Willy Russell's long-running Liverpool musical melodrama about twins who are separated at birth. Phoenix Charing Cross Road, WC2 (0171-369 1733) • Picc Circ. Mon-Sat 7.45pm, [5] 3.00pm, [7] 5.00pm, £11.50-£32.50, 165 mins.

BOOGIE NIGHTS Shane Richie stars in a brand new 1970s musical. Savoy Strand, WC2 (0171-836 8888) • Picc Circ. Mon-Sat 7.45pm, [5] 3.00pm, [7] 5.00pm, £11.50-£32.50, 165 mins.

BUDDY Musical biog-show tracing the life of Buddy Holly. Strand, WC2 (0171-930 8800) • Picc Circ. Mon-Sat 7.45pm, [5] 3.00pm, [7] 5.00pm, £11.50-£32.50, 165 mins.

CATS Lloyd Webber's musical version of T.S. Eliot's poems. New London Theatre, WC2 (0171-405 0072) • Picc Circ. Mon-Sat 7.45pm, [5] 3.00pm, [7] 5.00pm, £11.50-£32.50, 165 mins.

CHICAGO Maria Friedman and Peter Dinklage star in this hit Broadway musical. Adelphi, Maiden Lane, WC2 (0171-344 0055) • Picc Circ. Mon-Sat 7.45pm, [5] 3.00pm, [7] 5.00pm, £11.50-£32.50, 165 mins.

THE COMPLETE HISTORY OF AMERICA (ABRIDGED) Reduced Shakespeare Company's keenly-paced theatrical history lesson. Coven Garden, Piccadilly Circus, W1 (0171-369 1747) • Picc Circ. Tue 8.00pm, £6-£25, 120 mins.

DR DOLITTLE Phillip Schofield talks to the animals in this new stage adaptation featuring Jim Henson Puppets. London Apollo, Hammer Smith Queen Caroline Street, W6 (0171-416 6022) • Picc Circ. Tue 8.00pm, £6-£25, 120 mins.

THE MUSICAL Eight-act stage version of the TV series charting the high and low of a class of young school leavers. Prince of Wales Theatre, W1 (0171-839 5972) • Picc Circ. Mon-Sat 7.45pm, [5] 3.00pm, [7] 5.00pm, £11.50-£32.50, 165 mins.

FILUMENA Judi Dench and Michael Pennington star in Timberlake Wertenbaker's new translation of Edward Albee's play. Piccadilly Theatre, W1 (0171-369 1734) • Picc Circ. Tue 8.00pm, £6-£25, 120 mins.

GREASE Energetic stage version of the hit film. Cambridge Earls Court, WC2 (0171-494 5080) • Picc Circ. Mon-Sat 7.45pm, [5] 3.00pm, [7] 5.00pm, £11.50-£32.50, 165 mins.

AN IDEAL HUSBAND Christopher Cazenove and Susannah York in Peter Hall's acclaimed production of Wilde's comedy. Lyric Theatre, W1 (0171-494 5045) • Picc Circ. Mon-Sat 7.45pm, [5] 3.00pm, [7] 5.00pm, £11.50-£32.50, 165 mins.

INSPECTOR CALLS Stephen Daldry's widely-acclaimed production of JB Priestley's thriller. Gielgud Charing Cross Road, WC2 (0171-494 5085) • Picc Circ. Mon-Sat 7.45pm, [5] 3.00pm, [7] 5.00pm, £11.50-£32.50, 165 mins.

INTO THE WOODS Sondheim and Lapine's acclaimed musical based on the dark side of fairy tales. Dornier Warehouse Earls Court, WC2 (0171-369 1732) • Picc Circ. Mon-Sat 7.45pm, [5] 3.00pm, [7] 5.00pm, £11.50-£32.50, 165 mins.

THE INVENTION OF LOVE Tom Stoppard's play about the life of poet A.E. Housman, author of The Shropshire Lad. Theatre Royal, Haymarket, Haymarket, SW1 (0171-930 8800) • Picc Circ. Tue-Sat 7.30pm, [4][7] 2.30pm, £10-£22.50.

JESUS, MY BOY Tom Conti stars in John Dowd's alternative Christmas show. Apollo Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (0171-494 5070) • Picc Circ. Mon-Sat 7.45pm, [5] 3.00pm, [7] 5.00pm, £11.50-£32.50, 165 mins.

LOVE UPON THE THRONE Tasty food at the Charles and Diana marriage. Comedy at the Penton Street, SW1 (0171-369 1731) • Picc Circ. Mon-Sat 7.45pm, [5] 3.00pm, [7] 5.00pm, £11.50-£32.50, 165 mins.

LES MISÉRABLES Musical dramatisation of Victor Hugo's masterpiece. Palace Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (0171-434 0909) • Picc Circ. Mon-Sat 7.30pm, [5][7] 2.30pm, £7-£35, 195 mins.

MISS SAIGON Musical which retells the Madam Butterfly tragedy to Vietnam. Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, Catherine Street, WC2 (0171-494 5060) • Picc Circ. Mon-Sat 7.45pm, [4][7] 3.00pm, £7.50-£35, 165 mins.

THEATRE
WEST END

THE MOUSETRAP Agatha Christie's whodunnit. St Martin's Theatre, WC2 (0171-836 1443) • Picc Circ. Mon-Sat 8.00pm, [3] 2.45pm, [7] 5.00pm, £10-£24.50, 135 mins.

MR PUNTILLA AND HIS MAN MATTI Sean Foley and Hamish McCall star in a new version of Brecht's comedy satire. Albany St Martin's Lane, WC2 (0171-369 1730) • Picc Circ. Mon-Sat 7.45pm, [5][7] 3pm, £19.50-£27.50, 130 mins.

THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA Andrew Lloyd Webber's Gothic musical. Her Majesty's Theatre, SW1 (0171-494 5400) • Picc Circ. Mon-Sat 7.45pm, [4][7] 3.00pm, £10-£35, 150 mins.

RENT Musical inspired by La Bohème and set in modern day New York. Shaftesbury Theatre, Shaftesbury Avenue, WC2 (0171-369 1730) • Picc Circ. Mon-Sat 7.45pm, [4][7] 3pm, £12.50-£32.50, 160 mins.

ROYAL NATIONAL THEATRE OLIVER Peter Pan Stephen Oliver's musical accompanies the tale of the Boy Who Would Not Grow Up. With Michael Bryant as the Storyteller. In rep tonight 7.15pm, ends 20 Feb.

LYTTELTON: Cleo, Camping, Emmanuelle And Dick Terry Johnson's new play looks at the Carry On actors and recreates Sid James, Kenneth Williams and Babs Windsor on stage. In rep tonight 7.30pm, ends 16 Jan, 120 mins.

COTTESLOE: Haroun And The Sea Of Stories Tim Supple's stage adaptation of Salman Rushdie's acclaimed novel. In rep today 2.30pm & 7.30pm, ends 16 Jan. £18. NT2000: £4, concs £3. Day seats from 10am. South Bank, SE1 (0171-452 3000). BR/VE Waterloo. (01222-230451)

EXETER NORTH COTT THEATRE Dick Whitehead Follow the penniless hero as he searches for the streets paved with gold. Tonight 7.30pm, ends 16 Jan. £7-£15 Jan £28. Stocker Road (01392-493493)

HIGH WYCOMBE WYCOMBE SWAN Jack and the Beanstalk Jean Bohl, Michael Elphick, Peter Duncan and Bonnie Langford star. Tonight 7pm, ends 17 Jan. £8.50-£15.50. St Mary's Street. (01494-512000)

TOWN HALL Almost Romeo and Juliet Musical panto for adults. 5-9 Jan. 7.45pm. 9 Jan. Victoria Theatre. (01494-512000)

IPSWICH SIR JOHN MILLS THEATRE Ferry Cross the Waveney Sixties story of a Lowestoft fishmonger who has dreams of knocking The Beatles out of the charts. Mon-Sat 7.45pm, ends 16 Jan. £7-£15 Jan £28. Stocker Road (01392-493493)

WOLSEY THEATRE A Christmas Carol The Wolsey Theatre offers Dickens's tale of greed in Victorian London as an alternative to pantomime. 5-9 Jan. 7pm, 6, 7, 9 Jan. 2pm. £5-£15, concs available. Civic Drive (01473-253725)

NEWBURY WATERMILL THEATRE The Wizard of Oz Follow Dorothy down the Yellow Brick Road. Today 10.30am & 2.30pm, ends 16 Jan. £9.50-£14, concs available. Baginbun (01635-46044)

NORTHAMPTON THE DERNIGATE ALADDIN's Cave of Entertainment Exciting family entertainment starring Billy Pearce as Aladdin and Victor Spinetti as Abanazar. 5-7 Jan. 2pm & 7pm, 8 Jan. 4.30pm, 7.30pm. £12-£15, concs available. Guildhall Road (01604-624811)

OXFORD PLAYHOUSE THEATRE Cinderella Family panto with plenty of songs and audience participation for the dreamy spires. Today 2pm & 5 Jan. 5.30pm, ends 17 Jan. £6-£16.50. Beaumont Street (01865-798600)

POOLE POOLE ARTS CENTRE Aladdin Dora Bryan stars as the Slave of the Ring alongside Tracey Childs and Hollyoaks's David McAlister. Today 2.30pm & 7pm, ends 16 Jan. £9.50-£11.50, concs available. Kingsland Road (01202-685222)

READING THE HEXAGON The Wizard of Oz Michaela Strachan goes over the rainbow. 5-7 Jan. 2pm, 5-7, 9 Jan. 7pm, 8 Jan. 3.30pm, 8 & 10 Jan. 4.15pm. £10.50-£15, concs available. Queens Walk (0118-960 6060)

THE MILL AT SONNING Worn's Eye Worn's Eye about a woman landlady forced to house airman and protect her daughter from their attacks. Tue-Sat 8.15pm, mat Sat 2.15pm, ends 9 Jan. £21.95-£32.95, incl meal. Sonning Eye (0118-969 8000)

SALISBURY SALISBURY PLAYHOUSE Aladdin Magic carpet ride to Peking and the land of Genie. Roo With Rag tonight 7.15pm, ends 16 Jan. £8-£12.50, concs available. Malpas Lane (01222-320333)

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON ROYAL SHAKESPEARE THEATRE The Winter's Tale Seasonal tale of obsessive jealousy directed by Gregory Doran. Tonight 7.30pm, ends 4 Mar. £7-£30. Waterside (01789-295623)

SWAN THEATRE A Month in the Country Brian Friel's adaptation of Turgenev's portrait of all-consuming sexual desire. Tonight 7.30pm, ends 20 Feb. £5-£30. Waterside (01789-295623)

SWINDON WYVERN THEATRE Jack And The Beanstalk Exciting family pantomime with stars from TV's Rainbow and Doctor Who. Today 2pm & 7pm, ends 16 Jan. £11.50-£12.50, concs available. Theatre Square (01793-524481)

TEWKESBURY ROSES THEATRE Cinderella The Roses present their traditional family pantomime. 5-7 Jan. 1.30pm, 5-9 Jan. 7pm, 9 Jan. 2pm. £7-£10, concs £5-£8. Sun Street (01684-295074)

WATFORD PALACE THEATRE Jack And The Beanstalk Roy Hudd's family panto. 5-7 Jan. 2pm & 6.45pm, 8 & 9 Jan. 2.30pm & 7.30pm. £5-£13. Clarendon Road (01222-225671)

FIRST CALL, LAST CALL

First Call
STIFF LITTLE FINGERS definitive lyrical tales about 1970s Belfast so evocative that their fans left in droves when they moved from punk politics to pop pastures. They disbanded in the mid-1980s, but in a career path similar to that taken by Madness, their reunion gigs have been more popular than their original outings. And it appears that their sell-out shows are now not just seeing the return of die-hard fans but the appearance of new, younger ones. The Forum, London NW5 (0181-963 0940) 12 Mar

Last Call
IT SEEMS to many that Alan Davies (right) has much to be happy about. There's an acclaimed television show and a lucrative line in advertising. Women describe him as attractive, but approachable while men seem to appreciate his disarming easy going character. Fast ticket sales for his stand-up show suggest Davies may survive the over-exposure which has been the downfall of many other stand-up comedians, if only for the fact his show is so good-hearted and appealing that it almost defies criticism. The Civic Hall, North Street, Wolverhampton WV1 (01902-552121) 4 Feb



EXHIBITIONS

CANTERBURY
MARLOWE THEATRE Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs Ex-Blue Peter presenter Tim Vincent gets festive. Today 2.30pm & 7pm, ends 17 Jan. £8-£15, concs available. The Friars (01227-787777)

CARDIFF
SHERMAN THEATRE The Secret Seven Save the World New adventure, courtesy of Eddi Blyden, and set in 1998. 5-9 Jan. 7pm, £5-£10, concs available. Senegynydd Road (01222-230451)

EXETER
NORTH COTT THEATRE Dick Whitehead Follow the penniless hero as he searches for the streets paved with gold. Tonight 7.30pm, ends 16 Jan. £7-£15 Jan £28. Stocker Road (01392-493493)

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POOLE
POOLE ARTS CENTRE Aladdin Dora Bryan stars as the Slave of the Ring alongside Tracey Childs and Hollyoaks's David McAlister. Today 2.30pm & 7pm

TUESDAY RADIO

PICK OF THE DAY

THE ABSORBING feature dedicated to personal accounts of disability, *No Triumph, No Tragedy* (8am R4), returns for a second series, with Peter White going Stateside to meet Christopher Reeve (right). The actor who achieved fame as Superman discusses his feelings about the riding accident that left him paralysed from the neck down, and his awe-inspiring

comeback, in the recent US TV remake of *Rear Window*. In *True Colours* (8pm R4), the BBC's former South Africa correspondent, Allan Little, assesses how successful the country has been in overcoming the legacy of apartheid. Here he revisits Cape Town to hear what the Rainbow Nation means to its citizens now.

DOMINIC CAVENTISH



feminism 25 years after her groundbreaking collection of essays *Fear of Flying*. Tonight's studio guest is Bernard Donoghue, who reads from his new collection of poems, *Here Nor There*. 11.30 Jazz Notes. 12.00 Composer of the Week: Saint-Saëns. (R) 1.00 - 6.00 Through the Night.

RADIO 4 (92.4-94.6MHz FM) 6.00 Today. 9.00 NEWS: No Triumph, No Tragedy. See *Pick of the Day*. 9.30 Lean Times. 9.45 Serial: The Vanished World. 10.00 NEWS: Woman's Hour. 10.00 NEWS: Nature: Insight. 11.30 The Galton and Simpson Radio Playhouse. 12.00 NEWS: You and Yours. 12.57 Weather. 1.00 The World at One. 1.30 Full Orchestra. 2.00 NEWS: The Archers. 2.15 Afternoon Play: Elemental Tales. 3.00 NEWS: The Exchange: 0870 010 044. 3.15 The Melting Pot. 3.45 This Scattered Isle. 4.00 NEWS: A Good Read. 4.30 Shop Talk. 5.00 PM. 5.57 Weather. 6.00 Six O'Clock News. 6.30 The Cheese Shop Presents. 7.00 NEWS: The Archers. 7.45 Front Row. Francine Stock with the arts programme, including the verdict on Gus Van Sant's remake of Hitchcock's *Psycho*.

RADIO 3 (90.2-92.4MHz FM) 6.00 On Air. 9.00 Masterworks. 10.30 Artist of the Week. 11.00 Sound Stories. 12.00 Composer of the Week: Poulenc. 1.00 The Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert. (R) 2.00 The BBC Orchestras. 4.00 Voices. 4.45 Music Machine. 5.00 In Tune. 7.30 Performance on 3. Handel's oratorio based on the story of Susanna and the Elders in the Apocrypha, given in concert during last year's London Handel Festival. Emma Kirkby, soprano (Susanna), James Bowman, countertenor (Jocelyn), London Handel Choir and Orchestra/Denys Darlow. 10.20 Postscript. Five specially commissioned dramatic monologues that combine fiction and a news story. 2: 'Come the Day'. By Fraser Harrison. (R) 10.45 Night Waves. Richard Coles considers Erica Jong's 'What Do Women Want?', her latest pronouncement on the state of

homage to a past master, or a symptom of Hollywood's lack of new ideas? 7.45 Under One Roof. The last of three live-part dramatisations from the Michele Hanson stories, with Janet Maw, Edna Dora and Luisa Bradshaw-White. (2/5) 8.00 NEWS: True Colours - South Africa Today. 'Cape Town and the Western Cape'. Five years after South Africa's first democratic elections, Allan Little, the BBC's former South Africa correspondent, investigates multicultural harmony today. See *Pick of the Day*. 8.40 In Touch. Peter White with news for visually impaired people. 9.00 NEWS: Case Notes Special. 'No Issue'. Tracey Logan asks what science can do to help inter-female couples and what issues this provokes for society. 9.30 No Triumph, No Tragedy. The first of six programmes in which disabled achievers in the United States talk frankly to Peter White about how disability has affected their lives. 1: Christopher Reeve. At his home in New York, the actor talks movingly about his life since the riding accident in which he broke his neck. 10.00 The World Tonight. With Justin Webb. 10.45 Book at Bedtime: Nana. Juliet Stevenson reads Emile Zola's colourful novel of the Parisian demi-monde, a powerful evocation of the corrupt world of the Second French Empire (2/5). 11.00 The Patrick and Maureen

Maybe Music Experience. Patrick Barlow and Imelda Staunton team up again, this time as untimely married Patrick and Maureen who are meant to be presenting a classical music show but just cannot stop bickering. With Peter Jones, Stella Gonet and special guest Jack Davenport. Written by Patrick Barlow. 11.30 Talking Pictures. 12.00 News. 12.30 The Late Book: The Restraint of Beasts. 12.48 Shipping Forecast. 1.00 As World Service. 5.30 World News. 5.35 Shipping Forecast. 5.40 Inshore Forecast. 5.45 Prayer for the Day. 5.47 - 6.00 Farming Today.

RADIO 4 LW (198kHz) 9.45 - 10.00 Daily Service. 12.00 - 12.04 News Headlines; Shipping Forecast. 5.54 - 5.57 Shipping Forecast. 12.00 - 7.00 Test Match Special. **RADIO 5 LIVE** (693, 909kHz MW) 6.00 Breakfast. 9.00 Nicky Campbell. 12.00 The Midday News. 1.00 Ruscoe and Co. 4.00 Drive. 7.00 News Extra. 7.30 The Tuesday Match. After UEFA's revamp of its European club competitions, Russell Fuller and his guests discuss the future of football in Britain and in Europe. Is this the solution the clubs

have been seeking, or does the possibility of a European super-league for the elite still overshadow the domestic game?

9.00 Park Life. Mark O'Donnell discovers how Ron Noddes runs Brentford Football Club. (R) 10.00 Late Night Live. The day's big stories with Nick Robinson. Including 10.30 a full sports round-up, 11.00 News and finance. And between 11.30 and 1.00 a sharp and spirited late-night topical discussion. 1.00 Up All Night. 5.00 - 6.00 Morning Reports.

CLASSIC FM (100.0-101.9MHz FM) 6.00 Nick Bailey. 8.00 Henry Kelly. Including 9.00 A selection from the Hall of Fame. Plus Henry's High Flyer: a racing tip and Record of the Week. 12.00 Requests. 2.00 Concert: C P E Bach: Oboe Concerto in B flat, Wq164. Heinz Holliger, Camerata Bern. 3.00 Jamie Cull. 6.30 Newlight. 7.30 Smooth Classics at Seven. 9.00 Evening Concert: New York Philharmonic. Supper: Overture 'Light Cavalry'. Conductor Leonard Bernstein. Brahms: Violin Concerto in D. Conductor Kurt Masur. Anne-Sophie Mutter (violin). Bizet: L'Arlesienne Suite No. 2. Beethoven: Symphony No. 4 in B flat. Conductor Leonard Bernstein. 11.00 Alan Mann. 2.00 Concerto. 3.00 - 6.00 Mark Griffiths.

VIRGIN RADIO (125, 157-160kHz MW 105.9MHz FM) 6.30 Chris Evans. 9.30 Bobby Hain. 10.00 Nick Abbot. 4.00 Harriet Scott. 7.30 Mark Forrest. 10.00 Janey Lee Grace. 1.00 James Merritt. 4.30 Jeremy Clark. **WORLD SERVICE RADIO** (198kHz LW) 1.00 Newsdesk. 1.30 Discovery. 2.00 Newsday. 2.30 Meridian (Live). 3.00 World News. 3.05 World Business Report. 3.15 Sports Roundup. 3.30 One Planet. 4.00 - 7.00 The World Today.

TALK RADIO 6.00 Bill Overton and Sally Meen. 9.00 Scott Chisholm. 12.00 Lorraine Kelly. 2.00 Anna Raeburn. 4.00 Peter Deeley. 5.00 The Sports Zone. 8.00 James Whale. 1.00-6.00 Creatures of the Night.

SATELLITE AND CABLE

PICK OF THE DAY

THE FULL MONTY garnered more column-inches - to say nothing of more money at the box office - but in many ways Mark Herman's *Brassed Off* (8pm FilmFour) is the more substantial film. It brings real life to the issue of what happens to whole communities when their main industry is closed down. The *Full Monty* men turn to stripping, while the former miners find solace in their brass band. Among many

strong performers Stephen Tompkinson stands out as the ex-pitman forced to dress up as a clown in an attempt to make ends meet.

"Volcano of Death," this week's Great Escapes (8pm Discovery), focuses on the six-man British expedition in 1976 to scale Mount Sangay in Ecuador, thought to be the most threatening volcano in the world.

JAMES RAMPTON



Discovered (315525). 1.00 Connections 2 by James Burke (437544). 1.30-2.00 Ancient Warriors (882235).

SKY ONE 7.00 Count Duckula (89785). 7.30 The Chris Evans Breakfast Show (8244). 8.30 Hollywood Squares (9120). 9.00 Sally Jessy Raphael (85389). 10.00 The Oprah Winfrey Show (4478). 11.00 Gullit! (7740). 12.00 Jerry Jones (8037). 1.00 Mad about You (88058). 1.30 Jeopardy! (99501). 2.00 Sally Jessy Raphael (42785). 3.00 Jerry Jones (98533). 4.00 Gullit! (7742). 5.00 Star Trek: Deep Space Nine (8389). 6.00 Married with Children (8921). 6.30 Dream Team (7501). 7.00 The Simpsons (7018). 7.30 The Simpsons (7878). 8.00 Rescue Medics (7885). 8.30 Coppers (8501). 9.00 World's Wildest Police Videos (8850). 10.00 Greece Uncovered (82037). 11.00 Dream Team (8821). 11.30 Earth: Final Conflict (50058). 12.30 Highlander (8148). 1.30 - 2.00 Long Play (525244).

SKY SPORTS 1 7.00 Sky Sports Centre (444948). 7.30 V-Max (84724). 7.45 H2O (84495). 8.35 Sky Sports Centre (447800). 9.30 Ringing News (8085). 9.00 Aerobics - Oz Style (44921). 9.30 You're on Sky Sports (8543). 10.00 Football League Review (7916). 11.00 Max Power (8940). 12.00 Aerobics - Oz Style (4478). 12.30 V-Max (7025). 1.00 Football (4478). 2.30 Spanish Football (2037). 4.30 World Windsurfing (8018). 5.00 World Wrestling

Federation Live Wire (4327). 6.00 Sky Sports Centre (221). 6.30 Inside Scottish Football (8047). 7.30 Fastest (9747). 8.00 Greyhound Racing (7820). 10.00 Sky Sports Centre (57705). 10.45 You're on Sky Sports (85253). 10.45 Inside Scottish Football (83037). 11.45 Sky Sports Centre (465940). 12.00 You're on Sky Sports (4218). 12.30 Showjumping (8470). 2.30 Sky Sports Centre (882047). 2.45 Close.

SKY SPORTS 2 7.00 Aerobics - Oz Style (885650). 7.30 Sky Sports Centre (447800). 8.30 Ringing News (8085). 9.00 World Windsurfing (827785). 9.45 Sky Sports Centre (804327). 10.00 International Cricket Australia vs West Indies (274327). 11.00 International Cricket Australia vs England (200292). 11.30 International Cricket Australia vs West Indies (498453). 4.00 International Cricket Australia vs England (200294). 6.30 International Cricket South Africa vs West Indies (880105). 6.30 International Cricket Australia vs England (71821). 11.00 Fastest (9747). 11.30 International Cricket Australia vs England (875292). 2.00 Second Innings (202484). 2.30 - 2.00 Cricket Australia vs England (825049).

SKY SPORTS 3 7.00 World Windsurfing Federation Live Wire (884405). 1.00 Fish TV - Tony Dean Outdoors (854968). 1.30 Fish TV (883422). 2.00 Dicks Dawg's Sporting

It Ain't Half Hot, Mum (100220). 8.20 The Comedy Alternative: Yes, Minister (882292). 9.00 Red Dwarf IV (844037). 9.40 The Life (497921). 10.35 NYFD Blue (755882). 11.40 The Bill (140302). 12.40 The Bill (856167). 12.40 Spender (735998). 1.40 Backup (88185). 2.35 Live at Jangle (820567). 3.00 - 7.00 Shopping with Screensaver (293898).

LIVING 6.00 Try and Crew (498798). 6.30 Philbert the Frog (298305). 6.30 Johnson and Friends (848872). 6.45 Tiny Toes (770538). 6.50 Puka Dot Shorts (770952). 7.00 Practical Parenting (839124). 7.05 Practical Parenting (834310). 7.30 Calliope (827388). 7.35 Bug Alert (833834). 7.55 Practical Parenting (888750). 8.00 Barney and Friends (208579). 8.30 Tiny Tales (700550). 8.35 Tiny and Crew (843430). 8.50 Practical Parenting (463850). 9.00 Diet Show (200230). 9.30 The Roseanne Show (6005018). 10.00 The Jerry Springer Show (885353). 10.50 Mandy Povich (500230). 11.40 Brookside (564072). 12.40 Animal Rescue (766603). 12.40 Rescue 911 (370124). 1.40 Special Babies (830788). 1.45 Beyond Belief: Fact or Fiction (764384). 2.40 LA Law (869255). 3.40 Jerry Springer (781840). 4.00 Michael Cole (112583). 4.50 Rola Cola (200037). 5.40 Ready, Steady, Cook! (784230). 6.45 The Jerry Springer Show (104125). 7.05 Rescue 911 (82585). 7.35 Animal Rescue (81840). 8.30 Murder Case (765360). 9.00 Films: Choices of the Heart (76537). 11.00 Sex Life Down Under (378380). 12.00 Close.

TNT 9.00 36 Hours (964). 11.45 The Asphalt Jungle (1950). 7708940. 1.30 The Biggest Bundle of Them All (1968). 6758964. 3.30 The Perfumed Garden (1936). 4860983. 5.00 Close.

PARAMOUNT COMEDY CHANNEL 7.00 Clueless (1988). 7.30 Desmonds (7389). 8.00 Roseanne (8018). 8.30 Just Shoot Me (1993). 9.00 Cyndi (80308). 9.30 Seinfeld (54037). 10.00 Frasier (30356). 10.30 Cheers (19478). 11.00 Festival of Fun (13585). 11.30 The Larry Sanders Show (86501). 12.00 Late Night with David Letterman (35902). 1.00 Taxi (87229). 1.30 The Critic (2049). 2.00 Dr Katz (25625). 2.30 Soap (5772). 3.00 Wings (89864). 3.30 Nightstand (28612). 4.00 Close.

REGIONAL TELEVISION VARIATIONS

BBC1 N IRELAND As BBC1 London except 6.30 Newsline 6.30 (621).

BBC1 SCOTLAND As BBC1 London except 2.55 Dotman (822879). 3.50 Dochdaigh Mor (Oakley Dore). 6.00 News (869). 6.30 Reporting Scotland (821). 10.00 Frontline Scotland (3257). 10.30 The New Year Storms - a 999 Special (85853). 11.40 Crystal Balls (80582). 11.50 Film: Seduced by Evil (88706). 12.00 BBC News 24 (4722186).

BBC1 WALES As BBC1 London except 6.30 Wales Today (821). 10.00 Eastern Promise (845709). 10.35 The New Year Storms - a 999 Special (859124). 11.45 Crystal Balls (80583). 11.55 Film: Seduced by Evil (88707). 1.05 Film: Death of a Cheerleader (82253). 2.50 Joins BBC News 24 (4634148).

ANGELA As Carlton except 12.20 Angela News and Weather (82721). 1.00 Upshot (2434). 1.30 Home and Away (8259). 2.00 The Jerry Springer Show (208969). 3.20 HTV News (223853). 3.50 A Country Practice (830782). 6.00 Home and Away (848899). 6.25 Wales Tonight (953037). 10.30 HTV News (160598). 11.40 Film: The China

(848899). 6.25 Angela News (953037). 10.30 Angela News and Weather (160598). 11.40 Film: The China Syndrome (8216327). 2.00 The Haunted Flatmate (19612). 2.30 Highlander (835725). 3.25 Wish You Were Here...? (8319430). 3.55 Nationwide Football League Extra (8444612). 4.50 ITV Nightscreen (8882831).

HTV WEST As HTV Wales except 6.25 HTV West Tonight (848105). 6.30 The West Tonight (889).

MERIDIAN As Carlton except 10.25 This Morning (8261259). 12.15 Meridian News and Weather (859563). 1.00 Shortland Street (24934). 1.30 Home and Away (8259). 2.00 The Jerry Springer Show (208969). 3.20 HTV News (223853). 3.50 A Country Practice (830782). 6.00 Home and Away (848899). 6.25 Wales Tonight (953037). 10.30 HTV News (160598). 11.40 Film: The China

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WESTCOUNTRY As Carlton except 10.25 This Morning (8261259). 12.15 Westcountry News (859563). 12.27 Illuminations (826230). 1.00 Evening News (223853). 1.30 Westcountry News (223853). 6.00 Westcountry News (42679). 10.30 Westcountry News (160888). 11.40 Film: The China Syndrome (8216327). 2.00 The Haunted Flatmate (19612). 2.30 Highlander (835725). 3.25 Wish You Were Here...? (8319430). 3.55 Nationwide Football League Extra (8444612). 4.50 ITV Nightscreen (8882831).

YORKSHIRE As Carlton except 12.20 Calendar News Headlines (82721). 1.00 Home and Away (8259). 2.00 Coronation Street (52208). 3.20 Calendar News Headlines (223853). 6.00 Calendar (227). 6.30 Tonight (389). 10.30 Calendar News and Weather (160888). 4.45 Jobfinder (576009).

TYNE TEES As Yorkshire except 12.20 North East News and Weather (82721). 3.20 North East News Headlines (223853). 6.00 News: Weather (78787). 6.55 North East Weather (745868). 6.00 North East Tonight (42679). 10.30 North

East News and Weather (160888).

S4C As Channel 4 except 9.00 The Cosby Show (885036). 9.30 Film: Hello Dolly (518766). 12.05 Heret's One I Made Earlier (3638209). 12.30 Sesame Street (887269). 1.40 Planed Pent (972529). 1.30 Film: The Thief of Baghdad (9923979). 4.00 Fifteen to One (5654940). 4.30 Ricki Lake (8550124). 5.00 Planted Plant: Uned 5 (8722394). 5.30 Countdown (855476). 6.00 Newyddion (843076). 6.30 Heno (852563). 7.00 Pobol y Cwm (7574550). 7.30 Newyddion (8551853). 8.00 Y Sioe Gelf (8882358). 8.30 Pangell (7574605). 10.00 Brookside: Katie and Rachel convinced themselves of the identity of the rapist. Jacqui's day only gets worse as she carries the weight of the world on her shoulders. And Joey appears in court, but will Benny continue to cause him trouble? (5432768). 10.35 Mayday (866026). 11.25 The Body Story (8857230). 12.05 The Real Holroyd Show (7470101). 12.35 The Mini Job - the Making of the Italian Job (8604506). 1.05 Mini Man (7473273). 2.05 Mini Men (2150235). 2.35 Close.

INDEPENDENT PURSUITS

CHESS

JON SPEELMAN

THE BOSNIAN Ivan Sokolov propelled himself into the sole lead of the Hastings Premier on Sunday with a victory against the 15-year-old Ukrainian Russian Ponomarev. With 4/5, Sokolov was half-a-point clear of Matthew Sadler, who beat Mihail Salkaev to go second by himself on 3.5.

Meanwhile the erstwhile leader Sergei Shipov lost first to Ivan Sokolov as White in a fearsomely theoretical Grünfeld Defence, and then this ferocious game, to slip back to 3/5 ahead of the pack of Ponomarev, Emms and myself on 2.5.

In the opening, Black more often plays 7... b5. Instead they reached a fairly normal looking Scheveningen variation with the big difference that the bishop was on a2 rather than e2, say.

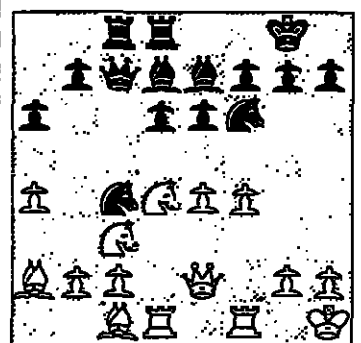
Black had a reasonable game and could, for example, exchange 11... Nx4 12 Qxd4, but went astray when he manoeuvred the knight to

the apparently active square c4. 15... Rf8? was wrong; instead he should try 15... Qc5. In the diagram, 16 g4! is immensely strong because Black's pieces are badly placed to retreat in an orderly fashion.

Black could try 16... b6 but after 17 g5 h5 18 f5 g5 Nf7 19 Qh5 seems to win. If then a) 19... g5 20 Qh4 Ne5 21 Rd3 Nxd3 22 Rxf7 Nf2 + 23 Kg2 Kxf7 (or 23... Nf5 24 Rxe7 24 Qh7 + Kf8 25 Nxe6 + Bxe6 26 Bxe6 Bxe6 27 Qg8 + Ke7 28 Qf7 is mate. b) Instead 19... Ne5 at once is more confusing but 20 Rd3 Nxd3 21 Rxf7 still works since the threats of g2 g6 and 22 Nxe6 are too strong.

Shipov had intended 18... b5 missing the decisive 19 f6 f6 20 Qe1. Instead 18... e5 was hopeless. At the end White will mate in just a few more moves.

White: John Emms
Black: Sergei Shipov
Hastings, 1999 (Round 5)
Sicilian Najdorf



1 e4 c5 14 Rd1 Nc4
2 Nf3 d6 15 Bc1 Rf8?
3 d4 cxd4 (see diagram)
4 Nxd4 Nf6 16 g4! Qc5
5 Nc3 a6 17 g5 Ne8
6 Bc4 e6 18 f5 e5
7 0-0 Be7 19 Nd5 Bf8
8 a4 Ne6 20 b4 Qa7
9 Be3 0-0 21 Bxc4 exd4
10 Kh1 Bd7 22 g6 Kh8
11 f4 Rcd8 23 exd7 Nc7
12 Ba2 Qe7 24 Nf4 1-0
13 Qe2 Na5?!

CREATIVITY

LOKI

PUZZLED READERS, wondering what the challenge was last week, need to know that the instructions were inadvertently omitted. Whoops! So you have another week to do it in, and the challenge is restated below. Only Susan Torres e-mailed me to ask what was missing, but now you all know my address is Loki.Vallhallab@btinternet.com, you could do that too!

Another gremlin delayed your New Year Resolutions mail, so instead we seek feedback on suggested challenges. Please feel free to explain why some kinds of task appeal but others do not. If music be the food of love, what feeds your Creativity? Share this self-knowledge, and we will play on and give you excess of it. No prizes though, just for casting a vote.

The traditional "think of unusual uses for..." task was popular, with Post Office rubber bands, collapsible umbrellas, earwax, cold compresses, sausage rolls, a wet Wednesday afternoon, yesterday's idols, General Pinochet, virtual pets, black squares in crosswords, an integrated transport policy and unwanted Christmas presents all having their advocates.

Literary tasks proposed included devising rude nicknames for famous people or irreverent acronyms for organisations; or writing a whole novella in one sentence, or more improbable East-Enders storylines, or caustic one-line play reviews; or making up new words with their dictionary definitions, or revealing what it

was the actress said to the bishop; or clumsy instructions for foreign goods in appalling English.

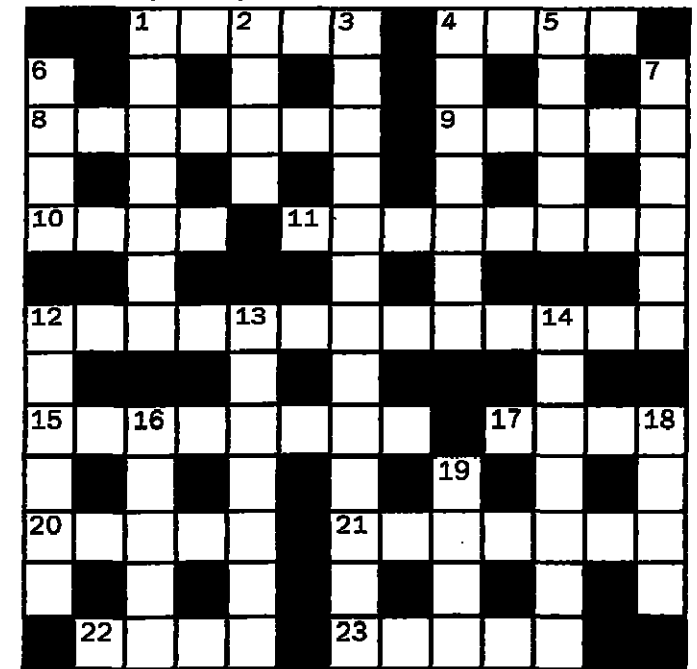
Miscellaneous ideas involved inventing a religion, nominating Seven Wonders of the Modern World, and quotations Oscar Wilde might yet write for the next edition of Chambers Dictionary of Quotations.

Scientific topics envisaged were strange inventions for Tomorrow's World, redesigning the human body, and what to do when the aliens land in Aylesbury (duck?). And there were imaginative "What If...?" scenarios, exploring the consequences if "cannibals were legalised tomorrow", "money grew on trees", "lead could be turned into gold" and "immortality proved possible". And it is an "Explore the Consequences" challenge we restate for this week's competition (the first four words got dropped on the cutting-room floor): Imagine the unforeseen consequences of a "leap second" being added at midnight on 31 December. We know the last minute of 1998 was 61 seconds long; that all the major clocks in the world stopped for exactly one second; that time stood still; and there were seven radio pips not six - but what else happened? or could have happened?

Write to Creativity, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 3DL, by 14 January for publication on 19 January. Three prizes of Chambers Dictionary of Quotations for the most imaginative.

CONCISE CROSSWORD

No.3811 Tuesday 5 January



ACROSS

- Gloss (5)
- Bored reaction (4)
- Cocktail (7)
- Social division (5)
- Labour (4)
- Oratory (8)
- Consumer survey, e.g. (13)
- Worship of false gods (8)
- Ethnic group (4)
- Stringed instrument (5)
- Musical toy (7)
- Nimble (4)
- Evade (5)

DOWN

- Conjecture (7)
- Long poem, e.g. (4)
- Distinct (13)
- Mexican peninsula (7)
- More sensible (5)
- Leave out (4)
- Save (6)
- Fruit (6)
- Insulating device (3-4)
- Fancy (7)
- Flower (5)
- Academic hurdle (4)
- Character (4)

Solution to yesterday's Concise Crossword:

ACROSS: 1 Shipping, 5 Dale (Chippendale), 9 Arson, 10 Records, 11 Ready money, 14 Wicket-keeper, 16 Churchgoer, 20 Panacea, 21 Onion, 22 Note, 23 Escaped. DOWN: 1 Sparrows, 2 Instance, 3 Pansy, 4 Norfolk Broads, 6 Acrr, 7 East, 8 Scheme, 12 Semolina, 13 Estrange, 15 Ethnic, 17 Hoo-hu, 18 Span, 19 Gnat.

Channel 5



TELEVISION REVIEW

It's out' need to be utilized that was being exploited here. Or why else would this be an commercial primetime?

it's our need to be stimulated that was being exploited here. Or why else would this be on commercial primetime?

DOCUMENTARY OF THE DAY

GREAT RAILWAY JOURNEYS (8:30pm, BBC2) Where better to travel by train than in India, where the vast networks carry more than 10 million passengers every day? Amazingly, there can be delays of almost a week. Ironically, this can be due to the distances involved. What's hardly surprising, to compensate, your fellow travelers will be to you instead of listening to their personal stories, and the food and tea sellers at each station cure hunger and boredom in one stroke. Here, Ian Hislop (*Right*) samples everything from Calcutta's hellish underpainted to the luxurious *Pullman* Wiggins in Rajasthan to his trip across the without rail!

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6.000 5 Nerve and Sport (S) (704-958), **7.00** WilderWorld (F) (S) (6292562), **7.50** Minutemaid (S) (8207665), **7.55** Winless Horses (F) (9623785), **8.00** Hawkbezo (F) (S) (535347), **8.30** Despicable Farm (S) (562747), **8.500** Weather Front (F) (S) (7) (386327), **9.30** The Open Whiffy Show (67562), **10.20** Sunset Beach (S) (7) (2320366), **11.40** Leaze (F) (S) (2204195), **12.00** 5 Nerve at Noon (S) (7) (356666), **12.30** Family Affairs (S) (7) (932262), **1.00** The Bold and the Beautiful (S) (S) (7)

3.30 FILM A Brother's Promise: the Dan Jansen story (Bill Crockett 1988 US). True-life tale of a speed skater Dan Jansen, who promised his dying sister that he would win an Olympic gold medal. Coldly short on quality sporting moments (\$) (V) (8835018).

6.20 Sunset Beach. Cole wants to know the truth from Fran (638497).

7.00 5 News, including First on Five. National and international news with Kinsly Young (S) (T) (5653579).

6.00 Film Sweet Temptation. (Ron Legmanaho 1993) **Surviver.** More to do for the rather-than-then-me brigade. The week's misfire is the 17-year-old girl who survived in the Amazon – after escaping from a Brazilian school – thanks to her knowledge of jungle wildlife. (F) (S) (7) (6/3/95).

US). Flooding evilets dreams in which a teenage girl's world is torn apart after she sleeps with her mother's young boyfriend. Strikingly film-making by numbers, *Thirteen* is one capable acting performances (7) (15033589).

10.30, 2nd. Plot episode of a psychological thriller about a young professor, played by Michael Eason. On his first day, he finds his recs have been changed, supposedly at his request, and his notes have vanished (4525621).

TELEVISION GUIDE BY CLAIRE GERWAT



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